

T I M E,

AND THE

END. OF TIME;

I N

TWO DISCOURSES:

THE FIRST

About *Redemption of TIME;*

THE SECOND

About *Consideration of our latter End.*

By J O H N F O X. *W*

Pfal. xc. 12. *So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts to wisdom.*

Lam. i. 9. *Her filthiness is in her skirts, she remembereth not her last end, therefore she came down wonderfully.*

Non pudet te reliquias vitæ tibi reservare, & id solum Tempus bonæ menti destinare, quod in nullam rem conferri possit! Quamserum est, tunc vivere incipere, cum definendum est.

Sen. de brev. vit.

L O N D O N:

Re-printed for J. WILKIE, in *St. Paul's Church-Yard.*

M,DCC,LXXIX.

1050/13

4406 Pb. 49.

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Eph. v. 16.

*Redeeming the time, because the days
are evil.*

IN the beginning of this Chapter the Apostle exhorts Christians to holiness in general, by setting before them a perfect pattern, *Be ye followers of God as dear Children, and walk in love.* The favourites of Heaven must imitate their Father, and like Gideon's brethren, resemble the Children of a King; the precept is, *Be ye holy, be ye perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect:* Then he goes on to press this great duty, more particularly upon all in their several Relations which he urgeth by many Arguments. And in the Text he seemeth to point out the opportunity, to put those and all other Christian duties into practice. See that you walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time.

Explication of the Words.

Time is taken under a double notion: There is the space of time, and there is the opportunity of time: *Tempus longum*

*Χρόνος Tempus,
spacium temporis;
καιρός est oppor-
tunitas.*

and *Tempus commodum* ; time and opportunity differ, time is the duration, or succession of so many minutes, hours, days, or years, one after the other, from the beginning of a man's life to the end thereof, *Job* vii. 1, 14, 15. *Is there not an appointed time for man upon Earth?* Opportunity is the time apted and fitted in order to this or that work or business, viz. a meeting of Time and means together, to effect the end. This is called the season or tempestivity of time, when time, tide, and wind meet and clasp together, *Eccles.* iii. 1. *To every thing there is a season or opportunity of doing:* Time may be continued when the season of time is ended; the sails of time may be aloft, when the gale of opportunity is lost. Every time is not a spring time, a seed time, a gaining time, Manna was not to be had but in the morning. The beauty of time, is the opportunity of time, *Eccles.* iii. 11. He hath made every thing beautiful in his time, this part of time we are to redeem. Redeeming denotes the excellent worth and preciousness of time; a commodity to be valued above the Gold of *Ophir*. *Solomon* bids us, *buy the truth*, *Prov.* xxiii. 23. Our dear Lord counselled a miserable

rable Church to *buy Gold and white Rayment*, Rev. iii. 18. And *Paul* exhorts us to *buy the time*, a Jewel of that price, which must be redeemed at any rate. Base vile things are not wont to be redeemed, but things of worth, namely, mens Liberties, Estates, Lives, &c. So our precious time, *Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.*

The words contain two general Parts.

1. *An Exhortation to a duty, redeem the time.*
2. *The reason of it, because the days are evil.*

From the words we may observe this Doctrine, which shall be the subject of my ensuing Discourse.

Doct. *The best of Saints, or the redeemed of God, have need to redeem the time:* This Epistle was written to a very famous flourishing Church in the purest times of the Gospel, amongst whom there were rare and singular Christians, they were called *Saints, and faithful in Christ Jesus*, chap. i. 1. and *chosen of God in Christ, before the foundation of the World*, ver. 4. and really converted, and brought into a state of life. Moreover, they had learned the duty of Mortifica-

tion, one of the hardest lessons in Christianity, chap. iv. 22. And were also sealed unto the day of Redemption, chap. i. 13. iv. 30. and had the earnest of their heavenly inheritance: And yet they, whose attainments were so high, must redeem the time. The same thing is prest in different terms, *Eccles.* ix. 10. It's called a working while it is day, *John* ix. 4. In the handling of this proposition, I shall shew you,

1. *When time may be said to be redeemed.*
 2. *What time must be redeemed.*
 3. *How time must be redeemed.*
 4. *Why time must be redeemed.*
 5. *Motives and directions to help you.*
-

First, *When is time redeemed?*

Ans. When time and duty, like those two twins, *Jacob* and *Esau*, take hold one of another, or as two loving yoke-fellows, go hand in hand; when duty attends time, as the shadow the body, or as the Maiden her Mistress.

This is to fill up time with duty, and to take opportunity by the forelock, or in Scripture phrase, to do the work of the day in the day. And to this end opportunities or seasons are to be desired,

as

as they offer an occasion of service, and of doing our duty. This we may see in holy *David*, *Pfal. cxxii. 1. I was glad when they said unto me, come let us go up to the house of the Lord.* When there was a way open to worship God in the beauty of Holiness, *David* rejoiced to see the true worshippers improve their opportunity, to go to that City, the name of which was *Jehovah Shammah*, the Lord is there, *Ezek. xlviii. 38.* And the Prophet *Zechariah* brings in the saints of God rejoicing in the same things, *Zeck. viii. 20, 21, 22. Let us go speedily to pray before the Lord, and seek the Lord of Hosts in Jerusalem: I will go also.* The Saints of old were wont to rejoice when the Sabbath came, because of the holy and heavenly duties of that day: opportunities and duty are always to be joined, *Gal. vi. 10.* This is to live according to the will of God, *1. Pet. iv. 2.* and to walk circumspectly, redeeming the time, *Eph. v. 15, 17.*

2. When we are truly careful to make up former negligence with double diligence, redeeming the time, we recover our loss. Time, according to this phrase, seemeth to be taken Captive, and we must redeem it. Redemptions are made

by purchase ; to redeem a thing, is to buy it for a price ; the price we redeem it with, is labour, travel, faithful and serious diligence, and greater activity and vigour in the prosecution of our duty. When what of time or seriousness hath been wanting in one day or duty, is made up, and supplied in the next ; this is the way to repair our sad soul-damages. *For the time past of our lives may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles,* 1 Pet. iv. 3. Christians, our sins have been many and mighty, but our services few and mean, therefore put the best leg before. Be not as the slug-gard, like the door upon the hinges, but as the Sun in the Heavens, that rejoiceth to run his race. *The hand of the diligent maketh rich,* Prov. x. 4. I heard of one who being a Prisoner in a dark dungeon, when the light was brought to him for a little time to eat his diet, would pull out his Bible and read a Chapter, saying he could find his mouth in the dark, but not read in the dark. An Argument that he made Conscience of redeeming his time. Sirs, to be watchful, diligent, laborious in the faithful improvement of all your time, talents, gifts,

gifts, graces, is the thing here intended. The precept is for labour, *Luke* xiii. 24. 2. *Pet.* i. 10. And the diligent in duty hath the promise of Glory, *Heb.* xi. 6. *To them who by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for Glory, and Honour, and immortality, and eternal Life, Rom.* ii. 7.

2. *What time must be redeemed?*

Ans. All time.

Time is so precious, that not any of it must be lost. The whole time of our life must be employed either about our souls in the service of God, or in the works of our callings, or in order thereunto. Particularly,

1. *The time of youth.*
2. *The time of health and strength.*
3. *The time of affliction.*
4. *The time of the Gospel.*
5. *The time of the Sabbath, or the Lord's day in special must be redeemed.*

First, *The time of youth* must be redeemed. The great God stands much upon Priority, to have the first and best: The first ripe fruits, the first that openeth the womb. O then offer the *Isaac* of thy youth, the spring and flower of thy

age to God, and stay not until the evil day. Begin first with him from whom thou hast thy being, go about the grand affair and work of thy dear and never dying Soul, before thou dost ingulf thyself in the cares of this World. Resolve to present the first ripe fruits to that good and gracious God, who desireth the first ripe fruits. In the bright morning of thy life, match thyself to the King of Glory, and become his Bride before thou art defloured, and defiled, by sin and the world. If the cœlestial seeds of Grace be sown in the morning, the pleasant and sweet flowers springing out of those seeds, will invite the Lord Jesus to come and walk in his garden, *Cant. v. 1.* If thou would'st be the Temple of the Holy Ghost, let him that made the house, be the first and chief inhabitant, and suffer not thine heart to be an habitation for Dragons and Devils, which will be thy undoing to all Eternity.

You young men, and young women, know, that the infinitely gracious God holds out the golden Scepter, and inviteth you to come unto him. The ruddy *David*, the child *Samuel*, the young *Timothy*, God calls, *1 Sam. i. 11. 12. 1. Sam. iii. 10. 1 Tim. iv. 12.* and the sooner,

sooner you come, the better it will be.
 Say then, this instant behold we come;
 thine we are, thine we will be; come
 now and take thine own, God will ac-
 cept you, and take it kindly, his arms
 and bosom is open to you, *Jer. ii. 2, 3.*
I remember the kindness of thy youth, the
love of thine Espousals, when the first fruits
was holiness to the Lord. If you would
 have the respect and kindness of a God,
 offer unto him the firstlings of the Flock,
Gen. iv. 4. viz. thy useful days. If a
 company of aged feeble persons, or
 cripples, were tendred to the king for
 service, he would not accept them,
1. Sam. xiv. 52. Mal. i. 8, 13, 14. Da-
vid from his youth, and *Josiah* while he
 was young, began to seek the Lord,
Psal. lxxi. 17. 2 Chron. xxxiv. 3. Young
 men, if you receive the seed of Grace
 in the morning of your age, it will take
 the deeper root and impression upon
 your hearts, and cause you to bring
 forth fruit in old age. Cloth will keep
 colour best that's dyed in the wool, and
 the Vessel will scent longest of that li-
 quor with which it is first
 seasoned. O then Remember *Prov. xxii. 6.*
remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth.
Eccles. xii. 2,

2. *The time of health and strength*, is to be improved: You that are now strong and lively, must not expect to be so always: You, as well as others, must count upon diseases, sickness, weakness, which will confine you to your Houses, Chambers, and Beds: now then, while your strength and health of Body, and natural vigour is continued, be mindful of your work and time, Luke xiii. 34. 1 Cor. ix. 24, 25. The greatest duties and difficulties in Heaven's way, are set forth by striving, wrestling, fighting, running, which requires the best of our time, and most of our strength. Can a sick and weak man run so as to obtain, or so strive and conflict as to overcome, judge ye: King *Saul* chose the strong and valiant for his service. 'Tis the strong must run the race, *Psal.* xix. 4. and the young must overcome the evil one, 1 *Job.* xi. 14. If a man had a business of great concernment, or a matter of life and death, that required time, strength, and diligence for the doing of it, and should omit it, until he were stricken in years, or until sickness or weakness invade him, every one would be ready to charge him with folly. If

If a Carrier, amongst many stout, strong horses, had one poor, lame, sick horse, and should lay the burthen of the greatest weight and worth upon that poor weak jade; we should conclude that either he was cruel, or that he wanted the understanding of a man. This is our case, the great affair of immortal Souls requireth time, strength, diligence, and all little enough. And shall we charge the whole stress of our everlasting state, upon a few days sickness, and weakness before our death, God forbid, *Eccles. xii. 3, 4.*

3. *The time of affliction* must be redeemed. Christians, *in the day of adversity we must consider*, *Eccles. vii. 14.* It was the time of *Jacob's* trouble, when the Apostle exhorted Believers to redeem the time: God speaks by his rod, as well as by his word, to both which we must have an ear. God sometimes teaches us, as *Gideon* the men of *Succoth*, *Judges viii. 16.* with Thorns and Briars of the wilderness. Let the affliction be of what *Schola crucis est* kind or degree soever, *Schola lucis.* Luth. either upon our Per- *Psalm. xciv. 12.*

sons, Names, Estates, Families, Church or Kingdom, yea, and of long continuance,

ance, we are to look upon it as from God, and for our good. For every affliction speaks to us in the language of *Ebud to Eglon, I have a message unto thee from God*; And God will reckon with us for the rods he lays upon us. I shall speak more to this in another place :

4. *The time of the Gospel* must be redeemed. Gospel-time is our spiritual harvest, and it is notorious folly to sleep or loiter in Harvest. The

Mat. iv. 6.	time of the Gospel is a
2 Tim. i. 10.	time indeed, viz. a time
Ezek. xiii. 8.	of light, a time of love, a
Rom. v. 8.	time of life, a time of li-
Isa. lxi. 1.	berty. Now the trumpet
John vi. 16.	of Jubilee soundeth, and all debts and

Mortgages may be taken up and released. Here's *liberty for the poor Captives, and the opening of the Prison to them that are bound. 'Tis now an accepted time, a day of Salvation, 2 Cor. vi. 2.*

a time to accept, or a time to be accepted, a golden and glorious time indeed. Behold, now there is a broad and clear way to his Mer-

*Tempus acceptum or
tempus acceptabile.*

Beza in loc.

cy-seat, the flaming sword is gone, the partition wall is down, all Bars and
Gates

Gates are removed, an Act of Indemnity is proclaimed, and there is a free admission for all to come and be saved; pardons are ready, *Isa.* xlv. 6, 7.

Sinners, your dear Lord Jesus, the great peacemaker, is now an importunate Suitor unto your perishing souls, namely, an inviting, knocking, waiting, promising Christ,

Prov. i. 22. ix. 4. *Isa.*

lxv. 2. *Mat.* xi. 28.

Rev. iii. 20. *Cant.* v. 2.

Job. vi. 36. The trea-

sures of Grace are o-

pened, and offered to

sale upon easy terms, *without money, and*

without price, Isa. lv. 1. *Rev.* iii. 17.

O make speed and come make the pur-

chase, buy the pearl of price that's better

than Rubies, and you shall have a trea-

sure in Heaven. The favour of God,

precious blood, white raiment, tried

Gold, and the eternal life of your never-

dying souls is worth the having: con-

sider also, that now the Holy Ghost calls

and offers his assistance to close the bar-

gain, to tie the Marriage-knot between

Christ and Souls, *Heb.* iii. If you lose

this opportunity, you may never have

the like. The Spirit and the Bride saith

come, *Rev. ult.* xvii.

*Quod offertur gra-
tia ex gratia Dei
est, qui sua consti-
tuit rebus omnibus
momenta, ut obla-
tam occasionem ar-
ripiamus.*

5. The

5. *The time of the Sabbath, or Lord's day*, must be redeemed : We must have a special care of sanctifying that day, it being the Sabbath of the Lord our God. This golden day from morning to night, must be spent in the service and worship of our Lord, either in public, private, or secret duties, and no part of it must be lost. Take no liber-

The youth that was lately hanged for murdering his Fellow Servant, confessed that his Sabbath - breaking, made way for all his other prodigious sins.

ty upon that day for frothy, vain, and unprofitable discourse, or recreations, or to ride, buy, sell, or work. This dreadful, God provoking sin of Sabbath-breaking, is a sin in fashion; hundreds in

this Nation serve the Devil more upon the Lord's day, than on other days. Then men are at leisure to serve the Devil, and satisfy their lusts, and go to the Ale-house, or to exercise themselves in sports and pastimes. O that Magistrates, Ministers, Masters of Families, and Parents, would look to it, *Neb. xiii. 17.* The Lord of the Sabbath commandeth thee, that *thou, and thy Son, thy Daughter, thy man-servant, and all within thy gate, keep that day holy.*

The

The Sabbath is called a holy convocation, *Lev. xxiii. 2.* and the Lord of the day is an infinitely holy, just, and jealous God. The Sabbath heretofore was called *Regina Dierum*, the Queen of days; in the New Testament it is called the Lord's day, *Rev. i. 10.* a day in which we commemorate the greatest mercy, *viz.* the glorious Resurrection of our crucified Lord, and that which the purest Christians, in the purest times, did carefully observe.

In the Primitive times, a serious and strict observation of the Lord's day, was a trial or badge of Christianity. When the question was propounded *Servasti Dominicum?* hast thou kept the Lord's day? the answer was turned, *Christianus sum, intermittere non possum.* I am a Christian, and cannot intermit it. It was a saying of an Eminent Divine, that he would judge of a man's Religion, according to the Reverence and care he had in keeping the Sabbath. Christians, you are to keep your Lord's Rest, and perform the holy duties of his worship chearfully, reverently, spiritually, *Job. iv. 24.* If ever you think to celebrate an eternal Sabbath with God in Glory, be careful of this duty. To enforce it, consider,

1. How

1. How strictly the Holy God imposeth it, and to what end it is: *Remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy, Exodus xx. 8.* This blessed day for communion with God, is to be premeditated upon before it cometh; therefore in the evening before the Sabbath, let all your necessary occasions be done up, that you may have nothing but what becometh the work of that day. Be like *David's* good man, *Psal. cxii. 5. ordering your affairs with discretion*, especially your spiritual affairs. If you expected the company of some worthy friend, would you be found in a sluttish posture, or sweeping, and cleansing your houses on that day, and all out of order? on the Lord's day you should vehemently expect the approach and presence of the King of Glory, therefore make all ready to entertain him.

2. Remember the excellent Epithets, and Titles of this blessed day, it is called *a High day, a Holy day, the Holy of the Lord, Honourable, Isa. lviii. 13.* Therefore let it be redeemed, lose no more Sabbaths.

3. Consider the blessings and soul benefits of that day, if it be rightly observed. It is your Lord's Market-day, in the
the

the which you have the precious Oil, the golden Mines, and Treasury of Grace opened that day. There are spiritual dainties for your hungry souls, to which you are by Christ invited that day, *Isa.* liv. 1. The Holy Ghost doth breath and blow that day, by the secret and sweet gales whereof, Saints mount up toward Heaven. The great God comes down, and gracious souls ascend that day, *Rev.* i. 10. And the Eunuchs that keep God's Sabbaths, have the promise of a name in his house for ever, *Isa.* lvi. 4, 5. I might add, the severe threatnings, and God's singular judgments upon the prophaners of the Sabbath, or Lord's-day. The man that was found gathering sticks upon the Sabbath-day, by an immediate command from God was stoned to death, *Numb.* xv. 32, 34, 35, 36.

How time must be redeemed.

1. *By taking and improving all opportunities for the glorifying of God.*
2. *By laying hold on the present time, and now day of grace for settling and securing your everlasting state.*
3. *By improving the present means of Grace for your speedy growth to Grace.*
4. *By*

4. By doing all the good you can to others while you may.
5. By labouring to keep up constant communion with God in holy duties.
6. By improving every providence and outward cross for inward and spiritual advantages.
7. By casting up your accounts every day, that you may make even with God.
8. By labouring to order every day's work in reference to your last day; That having finished your work, you may be fit to leave the World.

1. By taking and improving all occasions for the glorifying of God: Dear Christians, this is your Father's business, and the great Errand for which you had your being.

You were born, and new-born, to serve the interest of the holy and blessed God in the World; this is that glorious end, for which you should spend your strength and time, and lay out yourselves to the very utmost. That which is the chief end of your life, viz. to display and propagate God's Glory in the World, must not be neglected; other things are infinitely inferior, and must

*Tempus non potest
Deo consecrari, nisi
redemptum. Calvin
in loc.*

must be subordinated unto this. For the thoughts and designs of serving the interest of your Lord, is that which you must be always driving on in this evil World. God expects it, *Thou shalt have no other God before me, Exod. xx. 3.* God will be exalted in the heart, and in our life too. I will be glorified, saith the Lord, before all the people, *Lev. x. 3.* One way or other, the great Creator will have glory, by all his creatures. *God made all things for himself,* the World to be a visible and wonderful Declaration of his excellent glory, so that it is his due debt: *Psal. xxix. 1, 2. Psal. xcvi. 8. Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name,* to walk with God in our whole course, to design his glory, is the prime mark of our Saintship and Sincerity. This is the white in the mark we should aim at, the thing we should pursue resolutely, vigorously, with all our mights. Whether we pray, or preach, or read, or hear, or celebrate Sabbaths, or converse, exhort, or reprove, or indeed buy, sell, plow, sow, eat, drink, let it not be done for the World, or the interest of the flesh: We should have such a high esteem of God, and such strong desires, and strong affections to him, that the
pleasing,

pleasing, praising, and magnifying of God in all our ways, might be our main endeavour.

Christians, you are chosen out of the World to be God's witnesses, if you do not appear for God, his honour and interest, none will : All (saith the Holy Apostle) seek their own, *Phil.* ii. 21. but you are to deny ; and keep under self, which is directly opposite to the honour of your God. Wicked men are bold and resolute in a way of sin, to bear up the interest of the Prince of darkness, and will not you be as active for the interest of your Lord ? The Martyrs would rather die than dishonour God, who burning with zeal to God's glory, would glorify him in the very fire. God hath made you honourable, *Isa.* xliii. 4. being Kings and Priests, and inroll'd you amongst the first-born that are written in Heaven. You have a place in his heart, and a name in his house, you are Vessels of honour, and shall be honoured, *that we might be to the glory of his Grace* : Your everlasting Father hath mark'd you, and set his stamp and seal upon you, and put a principle of life within you, that ye might love him, and live unto him. The man that refus'd to bear
up

up his deceased Brother's name, *Deut.* xxv. 9. was to have his face spit on in the face of the Congregation. But shame and everlasting contempt will be upon their faces, that will not stand up for the honour of the Holy God, *Dan.* xii. 2. Christians, 'tis the sin that reflects dishonour on God's name, therefore allow it not in yourselves, and prevent it what you can in others. Redeem your time, and redeem God's glory, your days are evil, and you have but a few days for this work; do it, and God will own you, and advance you to a Kingdom.

Beloved in the Lord, though you differ in other things, agree in this, to glorify God on Earth, *that you may with one mind and one mouth glorify God,* *Rom.* xv. 6. Every one that's Godly crying out with Holy David, *Psal.* xxxiv.

3. *O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together,* *1 Cor.* x. 32. *John* xiv. *Eph.* i. 6. *As many as are perfect, will be thus minded,* *Psal.* iii.

2. By laying hold upon the present time, or now day of grace, for the settling and securing your everlasting state or blessed Eternity. Your Souls concerns are the greatest; yea, of infinite moment; and the things of Eternity claim a superiority.

rity. If you purpose to do your souls good, you must first seek the Kingdom of God, *Mat.* vi. 33. and take the Kingdom of Heaven with violence, *Mat.* xii. 12. *Let me die the death of the Righteous*, or a *Lord have mercy on me*, when you come to die, will not do, *Numb.* xxiii. 10. *Mat.* xxv. 11. And know sinner, it must be done in this thy day, now, or never, *Luke* xix, 42. While the door of Grace is open, before the Bridge be drawn and mercy gone, *Isa.* lv. 6. This must be done.

1. By complying with the present Call of the Gospel, in closing immediately with Jesus Christ, and in giving and resigning yourselves wholly unto him. This is that one thing necessary, that must be done speedily, to secure your souls, to provide for their everlasting welfare. Therefore do not procrastinate or delay it for a World. 'Tis thy grand affair, that must make thee or marr thee to Eternity. *He that believes, shall be saved; he that believes not, is condemned already*, *Job.* iii. 36. *Job.* viii. 24. *Job.* i. 12. If you do not now embrace the Lord Jesus upon the great and glorious Terms of the Gospel, you will as certainly be damn'd as if you were in Hell
amongst

amongst the Devils already, 2 *Thes.* i. 8. 9. *Heb.* ii. 3, 8, 18. You that want Christ, will you welcome Christ, saying with thy soul; come in thou blessed of the Lord, enter thou King of Glory, *Psal.* xxiv. 7. Thine is the Kingdom, take the Throne, sit upon the chiefeft chariot, take up thy lodging in my heart for ever, and suffer not the dead child to lie in the place of the living Child; and a dead World, and damnable Lusts, where my Lord should lodge: O blessed day and happy hour, in which the Heir of Heaven, and perishing Sinners meet, and are married! Here's a match for you! will you renounce all others, Sin, the Devil, and carnal Companions, and join yourself to the Prince of Life? speak the word, and the work is done; open the door, and he will certainly come in, and take up his abode for ever. All that the Father hath given him, shall come to him; and him that cometh, he will in no wise cast out, *Joh.* vi. 37. *Rev.* iii. 20. *Isa.* xxvi. 13. *Isa.* xlv. 5. 2 *Cor.* viii. 5. *Acts* xvi. 30.

2. By repenting without delay. This is the second great work, in which you must make speed; for until this be done, you are in danger every mo-

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ment of dropping down to Hell. Remember the sad story of the Woman, who, when her house was on fire, had her Child burned, while she was saving some of her goods. Sinners, your danger is great, your opportunities are flying, fly you as fast. Let me say to thee, as the Angel to *Lot*, *Gen.* xix. 16, 17. when in danger of being burned, *escape for thy Life, stay not lest thou be consumed.* The Life and Salvation of thy Soul cannot be secured without this, *Acts* xi. 18. *2 Cor.* vii. 10. *Luke* xiii. 3. Therefore labour to know the Plague of thy heart, *1 Kings* viii. 28. and plow up the fallow ground; sow in tears, and set about it this instant; before this day be ended, this Sermon ended, lest it should be said of thee, as of that Woman *Jezabel*, *Rev.* ii. 21. *I gave her space to repent, and she repented not; and so God's fury come forth like fire, and burn, and none can quench it.* *Jer.* iv. 3, 4.

3. By making it your great business to secure an interest in Christ, getting your Evidences for Heaven bright and clear. Christians, 'till you have gotten the pledges and tokens of God's love to your souls, 'till you are assured

assured of the truth of your Faith, and the sincerity of your repentance, and hereby of the pardon of sin, and of your interest in the Lord Jesus, you can have little comfort in your souls, or boldness towards God. Therefore, with might and main, work out your salvation, *Phil. ii. 12. Make your Calling and Election sure*, that upon certain grounds you may say as the Church, *Lam. iii. 24. The Lord is my portion, saith my soul. Doubtless thou art our Father, Isa. lxiii. 16.* Or as holy Job in his deep affliction, *Job xix. 25. I know my Redeemer liveth: I am thine, save me, Psal. xix. 91. Truly I am thy Servant, I am my Beloved's, and my Beloved is mine, Cant. ii. 16.* Christians, this assuring Faith is attainable; pray for it, and vigorously press after it that you may be sealed up unto the day of Redemption, that so an entrance may be ministred unto you, into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, *2 Pet. i. 10, 11.* And O how well have they redeemed their precious time, that have secured their never-dying souls. Know this, that Assurance requires both diligence and perseverance; therefore you must be con-

stant in the use of means, and lay hold on every opportunity of enjoying the Gospel. This our Lord commendeth in *Mary*, calling her attendance on the Word Preached, a choosing the good part, *Luke* x. 42. there you will taste the Chrystal streams, and view the Golden Mines of sound Doctrine, and wells of Salvation. This is the place of Spiritual wonders, where the Dead are raised, the Lepers cleansed, the eyes of the Blind opened, and the Devils ejected. Gospel Ordinances are the Golden Galleries where the King of Glory walketh: the Bed, where immortal souls are begotten unto God, and in which the broken hearts do travel 'till Christ be formed in them. Through these golden pipes, the water of Life is poured out upon thirsty panting souls, for the cheering of their Spirits. Here is the Doctrine preached, and words whereby thou must be saved, *Acts* x. Here Christ's Mother found him, it being the place where the Bridegroom and the Bride meet and solace themselves together. Do not forsake the solemn Assemblies; remember what *Thomas* lost by being absent when Christ came O come to the posts of Wisdom's

Wisdom's Doors, and with empty pitchers set yourselves under the spouts of the Sanctuary. 'Tis upon these waters the Angel moves, and Souls are healed. This is the School where all God's children are taught of God, and instructed unto the Kingdom of Heaven.

3. *By improving the present means of Grace, for your speedy growth in Grace,* that so the grain of Mustard-seed might become a great Tree, *Mat. xiii. 52.* The Christians course is compared to a Race, a Walk, to the Morning light, *1 Cor. ix. 24. Rom. viii. 1.* and therefore you must go on, and be progressive whilst you live. Believers should be as greedy of Grace, as the men of the World are of gain; because one grain of Grace, is more worth than a house full of Gold: yea, better than Rubies. You are compared to stars, to fruitful Trees, planted by the rivers of water, and you should glister and shine in this dark night of Hellish prophaneness, and live down, and convince this accusing debauched Generation. The Trees of the Lord should be full of sap, *Psal. civ. 16.* being grafted into the true Olive, and under the sweet dews of Heaven,

you should flourish in the Courts of the Lord, and bring forth fruit in old age, *Psal.* xcii. 12, 13, 14. Christians, keep your Lamps burning, and hold on your way, that the *David* of Grace may wax stronger and stronger. Make no stop, but strain to get and keep before, that you may win the prize. Growth in Grace is required of the highest Giant, as well as of the lowest Dwarf in Grace. They say of the Crocodile, he groweth as long as he liveth; and when he ceaseth to grow, he ceaseth to live. How many poor creeping Christians are there, who can hardly keep life and soul together, being like the door upon the hinges, *Prov.* xxvi. 14. and why, but because they are come to a pitch, and past growth, as soon as sprung up above ground. If there be the truth of Grace, there will be an endeavour after the strength of Grace; where is life, there is growth, 2. *Pet.* ii. 2. *The path of the just is as the shining Light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day,* *Prov.* iv. 18. Sirs, up and be doing, press toward the mark. *Add to your Faith, Virtue; to Virtue, Knowledge; to Knowledge, Temperance; to Temperance, Patience; to Patience, Godliness; that ye be neither barren*

nor

nor unfruitful in the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Be ye therefore steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord. And if you do these things, you shall never fall, 1 Cor. xv. ver. last. 2 Pet. i. 5, 6, 7, 8.

4. *By doing all the good we can to others, while we have opportunity. As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men. Hereby we imitate that character of Divine Goodness, Psal. cxix. 68. Thou art good, and dost good. Let every one please his neighbour for his good to edification, Rom. xv. 10. These four ways we must do good to others.*

First, this must be done, especially in your Families, to them that are more immediately under your charge, and for whom you must shortly give an account to the dreadful Judge of quick and dead. If Christ be come to thy heart, let Religion be set up in thy house without delay. If thou art really gracious, be relatively good, seeking the profit of many, that they may be saved, 1 Cor. x. 33. Sirs, if you would not be guilty of soul-blood, soul-murder, resolve to set up the Worship of God in your Families, and let Family work stoop to Family Worship. Endeavour to teach thy Children

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and Servants to know, obey, and serve the Lord, who is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. If you are the Children of faithful *Abraham*, do as he did, and walk in his path, *John* viii. 39. The holy heart-searching God witnesseth of *Abraham*, *Gen.* xviii. 19. *I know him, that he will command his Children, and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord.* 'Tis a great trust to have the charge and trust of souls; therefore let not your Children and Servants live as they list, but command them out of the way of sin, which will certainly bring them to Hell. O that Parents and Masters of Families would take up holy *Joshua's* resolution, *Josh.* xxiv. 15. *As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.* But, on the contrary, many seem, as it were, to have banished God and the Practise of Piety out of their Houses; as if Parents and Children, Masters and Servants, were resolved to serve the Devil, and to go to Hell, *John* viii. 44. The neglect of Family duties is a dreadful and provoking sin, and that (as a Godly Minister said) which will untile the house, and causeth God to rain curses upon the Table. Read and tremble at the Prophet's imprecation,

tion, *Jer. x. 25. Pour out thy fury upon the Heathen, that know thee not; and upon the Families that call not on thy Name.* How many prayerless Husbands do give occasion to their Wives to say to them, as *Zipporah* to her Husband, *Exod. iv. 25. A bloody Husband art thou to me.* Your Wives, Children, Servants, will sadly bewail it, and cry out living or dying: Oh that ever we were married to such Husbands, born of such Parents, bound to such Masters, that had no regard to serve God or care of souls! If you are Christians indeed, let a constant course of reading the Word, Catechising, and Prayer, be kept up in your houses; for when death hath separated you and your Relations, it will grieve you to the heart, that you did no more to further the good of their precious Souls, *Acts x. 2, 30.*

2. By taking all occasions, where ever you are, or come, to further the conversion of perishing sinners. If you have tasted that the Lord is gracious, and are taken out of the Iron Furnace, as Firebrands out of the burning, where, where is your pity and bowels to souls in peril? Can you be contented to be happy, *Jude xxii.* and to go to Heaven, alone, and not endeavour by your Prayers, counsels,

and examples, to persuade and draw others into Heaven's way? wicked men are active for the Devil, who, like Snails, leave their slime behind them, wherever they come; and are emptying the poison of sin one into the other, and so furthering their damnation. What multitudes do you see weltering in their blood, and making post-haste to Hell, whose desperate and deplorable case should excite your compassion, and cause you to speak a word in season for their Salvation. Your dear Lord, whom you should imitate, *went about doing good*, *Acts* x. 38. He improved his opportunity, (*John* iv.) to convert a notorious sinner; though weary and thirsty, was not careful of hastening the meat, because he preferred the opportunity to bring her Soul out of Satan's snare, and to save her. When at your Tables, or buying, or selling, or travelling, opportunity may be taken to speak of God, and the things of God, and to leave some conviction upon the company. Thus *Philip* falling in with the Eunuch whilst he was riding on his way homewards from *Jerusalem*, closed with him, and was an instrument to save the soul of him he never saw before, *Acts* viii. And by the Heavenly Discourse that dropped from

from the mouth of Mr. *Carter*, Pastor of *Brainford* in *Suffolk*, a Gentlewoman was converted while she was waiting on him in his Chamber, warming his Bed. A word spoken in season, through God's blessing, may save a soul; and it is our duty to endeavour it. Mr. *Ignatius Jordan* of *Exeter*, was exceeding instrumental this way; who would go from house to house to put his Neighbours in mind of their souls concerns. Holy *David* was not afraid or ashamed to speak of God before Kings, and to tell what God had done for his soul: and, said he, *I will teach transgressors thy ways, and sinners shall be converted unto thee*, Psal. li. 13. for, *he that converteth a sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death*, James v. 20. When at any time your Neighbours are sick, and under the hand of God, take that opportunity to visit them, to put them in mind of death and judgment, and to make them sensible of the necessity of Faith and Repentance, without which there can be no hopes of Heaven. Our *Proverb* is to *strike while the Iron is hot*. Upon a bed of languishing, when death looks men in the face, they seem serious and fit to receive the impresson of faithful counsel for their souls. To which join

serious prayer; for, *the prayer of faith* (saith the Apostle) *shall save the sick*, and it may save the soul.

3. By provoking and encouraging our fellow brethren in the way of Heaven. We must *exhort one another daily, while it is called to day*, Heb. iii. 13. *And provoke one another unto love, and to good works; and so much the more, as we see the day approaching*, Heb. x. 24, 25. Wicked men, and the children of the Devil, have their go *with us*; and do stir up one another in the way to Hell; and shall not Saints edify and *build up one another in their most holy Faith*, Rom. xiv. 19. xv. 2. 1 John v. 11. Eph. iv. 29. 1 Cor. xiv. 26. Jude xx. *They that feared the Lord, spake often one to another*, Mal. iii. 16. Christians ought and should spend that time in serious and profitable discourse, which others spend and waste in idle and vain discourse. Say with the man after God's own heart, *Come all you that fear God, and I will tell you what he hath done for my Soul*. That which you have seen and heard, you must declare to one another, 1 John iii. 3. Hereby be helping forwards toward Heaven, and comforting one another by the comfort wherewith ourselves are comforted of God, 2 Cor. i. 4. *When thou art converted, strengthen thy Brethren*, Luke xxii. 32.

4. We

4. We must do good to others, by distributing to their outward wants and necessities, and hereby *lay up a treasure in Heaven, before our treasure in earth fail,* and we lose both, *Mat. xix. 21.* This is to honour the Lord with your substance, *Prov. iii. 9.* This is to make friends with the unrighteous Mammon, and to provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the Heavens that faileth not, *Luke xii. 33.* This duty must not be forgotten (*Heb. xiii. 16.*) because 'tis a sowing of seed, *2 Cor. ix. 6.* and it will spring, and bring forth a Crop or Harvest in this or the other World, *Eccles. xi. 1, 6.* God will not forget it, *Heb vi. 10.* The Lord Jesus will certainly reward it, *Mat. xxv. 40.* A *Well done*, from Christ hereafter, will compensate all the service of *well-doers* here, *Mat. xxv. 31.*

5. *By labouring to keep up constant communion with God in all holy duties.* Christians, you may lose time in the very service of God, if you are not careful therein to converse with him. Take heed of a slight spirit in serious performances. God looks upon the heart, and most there. Some serious preparation is necessary, before you approach the presence of the High and Holy God. *Joseph* shaved himself,

self, before he would come into *Pharoah's* presence. Let your Heaven-born souls in every duty, with the love-sick Spouse, go out to meet your Lord; and take up with nothing else. 'Tis not the picture of the Husband, but the presence of the Husband, that can satiate the truly loving longing Spouse. It is a blessed sight to see souls working towards God, gasping and panting after the Lord Jesus Christ, *Psal. xlii. 1, 2.* O labour for such a frame of heart, and bewail a narrow and contracted spirit. Do not perform duties for duties sake, so as to make duties the end of duties; but as the *medium*, by which thy Soul may draw nigh to God, and meet with him. The countenance and presence of God in a duty, is the very suburbs of glory, yea, the very gate of Heaven, *Gen. xxviii. 17.* Let this be in thy thoughts, and the very purpose of thy heart, and expect it vehemently in every access to God. Let thy soul *follow hard after God*, and say, *one thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, Psal. xxvii. 4. Psal. lxxxiv. 2.* Duties are only the outward Court, only the form, shell, and carcass of Religion; as pipes without water,
breasts

breasts without milk; as sails without wind, or as a body without a soul, that hath no life. The increase of your Grace and Holiness depends upon your acquaintance and communion with the God of Grace. It was *Moses* his being in the Mount, that made his face to shine; and the King's being at the Table, that caused the Churches *Spikenard* to send forth the smell thereof, *Cant. i. 12.* The presence of the glorious God on a Sabbath, the presence of God in Prayer, or at a Sacrament, will be unto thy soul as marrow and fatness, and that which will make thy hands to drop with Myrrhe, and thy fingers with sweet smelling Myrrhe. Thus it was with the Spouse, when her beloved put in his hand by the hole of the door, *Cant. v. 4, 5.*

6. *By improving every Providence, every Comfort, every Cross for God's Glory and our own Spiritual advantage.* God doth nothing in vain; for he hath a peculiar respect unto the good of his people in all his dispensations: he doth time, measure, and order every dark and afflicting providence for his Church's advantage, *Jer. xxiv. 5. Rom. viii. 24. Heb. xii. 10, 11.* God's chastning and teaching commonly go together; therefore it is, we must

must *bear the Rod, and who hath appointed it*, Mich. vi. 9. The Rod hath a *Voice*; beasts may feel the Rod, but the Believer hears the Rod. God's Rod should make us like *Aaron's Rod*, bud, blossom, and to bring forth the peaceable fruits of righteousness, *Heb. xii. 11*. Now if you would be bettered by affliction, endeavour to do three things.

1. To understand the meaning or mind of God in them, for what sins committed, or duties neglected they are sent: Afflictions are God's messengers, and we should never be quiet till we know their errand, *Job x. 2*.

2. See the hand of God in all those Afflictions. So did *David*, *Psal. xxxix. 10*. And holy *Job*, i. 21. *Hos. vi. 1*.

3. Labour to answer the end of God in your straits and troubles, that you might be made more humble, more holy, more heavenly than before; that we may say, and find, that it hath been good for us to be afflicted. We have as much reason to seek unto God for a blessing upon our *daily Rod*, as upon our *daily Bread*.

7. *Time must be redeemed by casting up your accounts every day, and so to make even with God, and not get further into his debt.*

This

This will be the way to get an acquittance, to procure a pardon, before you are called and forced to an account. Secret duties, if well done, are the sweetest duties ; and yet sadly neglected by Saints themselves. You should retire every night, and spend a little time in self-examination ; and when you sit alone, commune with your hearts, and call over the passages and actions of the day past. We read, *Gen. xxiv. 63.* that *Isaac* went out in the evening-tide to meditate ; a precious duty, but rarely practised. Christians should spend void spaces of Time in ejaculatory Prayer, and holy Meditation. And O how hard it is to ascend this mount of heavenly meditation ! 'Tis very easy and delightful to think of the World, the pleasures of Sin, Friends, Riches, worldly business ; but to meditate on God, Heaven, Eternity, the insufficiency and vanity of the creature, the bitterness of sin, the certainty of death and judgment, (the very inwards of Religion) is very difficult. Before you lie down upon your Beds at night, call yourselves to an account by such questions as these :

1. I have lived many years in the World ; what have I been doing all my days ?

days ? Have I answered the end of my Being ?

2. Have I had a holy awe of God in the midst of my worldly business this day ? What thoughts of Death and Judgment have I had ? Where hath my heart been ?

3. How have I performed duties this day ? What have been the sins of this day, the mercies of this day, that I may beg the pardon of the one, and bless God for the other ?

4. What assistance and communion with God, have I had this day in the duties of his Worship ? Have not God and my soul been strangers this day, and many days together ?

5. What have I done or spoken for God and his glory this day, in my Family, or elsewhere ? have I demeaned myself like a child of God this day ? This is to make Religion our Business, or to walk in the fear of the Lord all the day.

6. *Improve your time by endeavouring to order every day's work with reference to your last day.* The end of every duty, and the great reason of redeeming time lies here, namely, that we may be fit to die, and stand before God. Therefore must we glorify the infinite holy God, and make him

him our friend. Hence it is that we must secure our souls and speedily get into Jesus Christ and grow in grace, do good to others, call ourselves to an account, and clear our title unto Heaven, that all our work may be done up while it is day, and none left to do, let Death call when it will.

The Reasons why our precious Time must be redeemed, are,

1. Because the days are evil.
2. Because it is a considerable part of our Christian Wisdom.

Reason 1. *Because the days are evil.* This is the Apostle's Argument to enforce the duty. Precious Time, and evil days run parallel; therefore no part of a little time must be lost. I shall instance in a few particulars, to make it appear.

1. *The Tares of false Doctrine, or Diabolical, Blasphemous, Damnable Opinions, do abound.* How do the Devil's Agents endeavour to raze and undermine the very foundations and principles of the Christian Faith? Those old and damnable Heresies that have been condemned, and expunged out of the Church of God, are greedily embraced and swallowed down by more than a few, 2 *Tim.* iii. 1. and iv. 3. 2 *Pet.* i. 12. *Ye therefore, Beloved,*
seeing

seeing you know these before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your steadfastness, 2 Pet. iii. 17. 2 Tim. i. 13.

2. *Mens flagitious lives, and most prodigious sins, make the days still evil.* What execrable abominations are there committed, upon the stage of this evil world! Iniquity abounds, wickedness is in credit, and Religion under disgrace. Many hate the power of Godliness, but are not ashamed to wear the Devil's Livery. May we not complain with the Prophet, and say as, *Hos. iv. 12. There is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the Land. By swearing, and lying, and killing, and stealing, and committing Adultery, they break out, and blood toucheth blood; therefore shall the Land mourn.* And as *Isa. xii. 15. For our transgressions are multiplied before thee, and our sins testify against us; and truth faileth, and he that departeth from iniquity, maketh himself a prey.* And *Amos v. 10, 12, 15. They hate him that rebuketh in the gate, it is an evil time.*

4. Many are back-sliden and Apostatise. How are the mighty fallen! the Falling-sickness hath been an epidemical Disease, *Mat. xxiv. 12. Because iniquity shall abound, and the love of many shall wax cold,* *Jer. ii. 2. 2 Tim. i. 15. Rev. ii. 4.*

4. Doth

4. Doth not God frown, and threaten to remove the Candlestick, and leave us in darkness? *Rev.* ii. 5. *Amos* viii. 9, 11.

5. How is the Family of God, and Friends of Christ, divided and subdivided one from another? *Moab* and *Ammon*, *Herod* and *Pilate*, can unite against Christ and his Interest, when Christ's little flock are at a distance one unto the other, *1 Cor.* iii. 3, 4. And when it thus comes to pass, the days are evil, and our time had need be redeemed.

Reason 2. *Redeeming the time, will render us truly wise. See that you walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time,* *Eph.* v. 15. *Eccles.* vi. 5. The wise man's heart (saith *Solomon*) discerneth both Time and Judgment. To work while it is day, and to do a great deal of work in a little time, commendeth the wisdom of the Agent. Whatever Learning, Parts, Endowments men have, they are not wise, unless they redeem the time. The men of *Issachar* were of great account with *David*, because they had understanding of Times, to know what *Israel* ought to do, *1 Chron.* xii. 32. The wise God, in whose hands is our time, taxes the *Jews* for fools, *not observing the time,* *Jer.* viii. 7, 8. and so doth our Lord Jesus the Pharisees,

risees, *Mat.* xvi. 2, 3. Therefore redeeming of time is called a *walking in wisdom*, as the Apostle expresseth it, *Col.* iv. 5.

The APPLICATION.

Use 1. **F**irst, if time must be redeemed, we may infer, that sure then *there is an Eternity*. Let all the wasters of time count upon it. It is as certain as any thing in this World, that there is another World. You may venture your Lives, your Souls, and all, upon the truth of it. Why should the blessed Apostle *Paul* press Believers so strictly to redeem Time, but in order to their everlasting welfare? Assure thyself of it, and believe it as firmly as if both eternities did now present themselves to thy bodily eyes, and thou didst see the Devils and Reprobates in their chains of darkness, and hear them cry and roar in those eternal flames: and also see *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*, and all the Saints departed, upon the Throne, singing the Song of *Moses*, and the Lamb. This is that which is either believed or feared by the best and worst of men; O that it might have a deep and lasting impression upon all your hearts?

2. *The opportunity of time is a very precious privilege.* To have a gale of opportunity

tunity to convey us to glory, or the white flag upon the wall, inviting us unto our work, to sue out our pardon before 'tis too late. Time is a rich invaluable Treasure, and yet a transient
 Treasure: *Time (God's Post) runs apace; yea, flies as it were upon Eagles wings, and will be gone. Time is compared to Golden Sands running between two eternities, and 'tis an infinite mercy they are still running, that you have a day to work out your salvation, to agree with the adversary while he is in the way, viz. to make up the breach between God and your soul, *Rev. ii. 21.* The continuance of time is very uncertain, *The time is short, 1 Cor. vii. 29.* The whole is but a span, a very little space. 'Tis but a few days more, and then thy last day; a few hours more, and then thy departing hour; a few breathings more, and then thy last breath.

3. Time, as precious as it is, and which should be redeemed at any rate, is often let slip. What shall we do to pass away the time? is common in some men's mouths; it's a commodity that lies upon their hands; they know

* *Punctum est, quod vivimus & puncto minus.*

Non exiguum temporis habemos, sed multum perdimus. Sen.

know not what to do with it. How profuse and prodigal are most of this great treasure, who make no improvement of it? How often hath opportunity come to us, and waited on us, but very few are found to lay hold upon it? To how many Time-wasters may that killing text, *Luke xix. 41, 42.* be applied? And when he came near, he beheld the City, and wept; he could not speak it without tears, saying, *If thou hadst known (even thou at least) in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace, but now they are hid from thine eyes.*

4. *Spiritual sloth, whereby we lose so much of our precious time, it is a sore evil, and very dangerous. Slothfulness (Solomon saith) casteth into a deep sleep, Prov. ix. 15. The slothful man is like the door on the hinges, Prov. xxvi. 14. The slothful is brother to the great waster, Prov. xviii. 9. Therefore be not slothful. Rom. xii. 11. Heb. vi. 12. We read that Joshua said to the Sun, stand still; but God never said*

to the Soul, stand still. Religion requires action, labour, diligence, for it doth not consist in airy, empty notions, and speculations of the head; but in the exercise of the mind and heart. Habits must

must be exerted ; Grace improved : Heaven (that is all up hill) must be strived for, and gotten, as it were, by force and victory. 'Tis a shameful and deformed sight, to see a man professing Godliness in a Lethargy, and not prosecuting his duty. Cast off thy lazy and dull spirit and temper, lest thou be found that wicked, slothful, and unprofitable servant, who must be cast into utter darkness, *Matth. xxv. 26, 30.* Let me say to you, as the *Danites* to their brethren, having spied out a good land, *Judges xviii. 9. Are ye still? Arise, and be not slothful to go out and to possess the land.* The Heavenly country is before you ; arise, and work, and lose it not for want of labour. Let not spiritual sloth, by eating out your time, hinder your work, and rob you of your wages, *Rev. iii. 11.*

5. *If the best of Saints should redeem their time, what have sinners need to do?* You that have been slumbering and sleeping all your time, and not gone one step in the way to Heaven, but many in the way to Hell, had need up and be doing, or else you will be eternally undone. *Whilst it is called to-day, if you will bear his voice, harden not your hearts.* Do not spend so freely of this swift and precious stream of

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Time

Time, every drop of which, hath an influence upon Eternity. *Knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep. The night is far spent, the day is at hand; cast off therefore the works of darkness, and put on the armour of Light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in Rioting and Drunkenness, not in Chambering and Wantonness, not in Strife and Envy; but put you on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof, Rom. xiii. 12, 13, 14.*

6. *If time, and every part and moment of it, must be improved; this serves to confute those that reproach serious diligence in Duty, as a needless thing.* If the business of our immortal souls did not require great care and diligence, why doth Paul here enjoin us to walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise! Christians, 'tis your wisdom, to know your work, and the time to do it. There's no trifling about Eternity; now is the day for the things of your peace, let it not be hid from your eyes. It will be very sad, when you are passing into the other world, to see that you have all your life-time been sowing the wind.

Use 2. Examination. *Try whether you are redeemers of the time, or not.*

Reflect

Reflect upon what I have said, and thy Conscience will tell thee thou hast spent most of thy time in sin and vanity. How fruitful are thy duties? Are thy hours for God? Do Time and Duty go hand in hand? Mayest thou not cry out, many a time, *Diem perdidisti!* daily I lose a day. Examine yourselves, don't silence or stop the mouth of Conscience; if so, it will cry aloud another day.

Let me ask you these few questions.

1. Have you seriously bewailed the loss of time, and begged the pardon of it?

2. Have your souls sincerely clos'd with Jesus Christ, and freely and fully given up and resigned yourselves to him to be his for ever.

3. Do the great concerns of God's glory, and your salvation, bear down all before them? Canst thou say, though I follow my Calling, and take care for my Family, yet I am most solicitous about my everlasting condition? whether they be pleasures or profits; I can say, Pleasures of sin be gone, World stand by. There is a God to serve and honour; I have a soul must be sanctified and saved: I have a short time to redeem, I have a debt to pay, an account to give, a sentence to receive, an eternity to live. This

is not to be slighted ; I must and will save my soul ; Hell is most intolerable and eternal.

4. Will you now promise and stand to it, that for the future you will trade more for Eternity, and get better evidences for Heaven ? go about the work of Faith and Repentance speedily ; lest Death should call, and you not ready.

Use 3. Of Lamentation. *That professors should be so far from redeeming of time, or of doubling their diligence, that they neglect their duty.* I may cry out with the Prophet, Call for the mourning Women ; for who is not guilty in this kind ? *Amos* v. 16. Sirs, for this should our Souls mourn in secret places ; the serious consideration of which, is enough to fetch blood from our hearts, and floods of tears from our eyes. How little care is taken in spending that well, which, when it is gone, we have no hope it can be restored to us again. Do not you complain of the want of time, seeing you waste time. There are many poor frivolous excuses : The Servant will say, that he hath a hard, cruel Master ; the Wife complains of her wicked Husband ; the Child of his ungodly Father ; another, of the poverty of his Family ; he can spare no time. Whoever

ever pretends the want of time, let me tell thee, thou hast a carnal, dead, sinful, slothful heart, the cause of all. Hast thou not time for every other thing, namely, a time for eating, drinking, sleeping, potting, piping, playing, and none for Heaven? Can you rise early, go to bed late, and eat the bread of carefulness, to get the meat that perisheth; and find no time for God and your Souls? will this excuse thee another day, thou careless ignorant, deluded Soul? Your Corn, Cattle, your Sheep, your Swine, your Hawks, your Horses, and Dogs, are cared for, but for the better part, there's no care at all. Wilt thou tell the great & terrible Judge, at the last day, I would have been saved, but I had not time? there are many that eat their bread by the sweat of their brows, that take time for their souls; who will be brought in as witnesses against you at the last day. Will you squander away your time, and the days evil, and opportunities for your souls hardly come at? O consider, it's high time to awake out of sleep.

Exhortation to redeem Time.

Use 4. You have heard what it is to redeem Time, and how Time must be

redeemed. *Now let all resolve, without delay, to put this so necessary a duty in practice.* Let young ones resolve upon it, and the middle-aged with the hoary-heads. Tender unto thy God the cream and flower of thy Age and Time, and think it not too soon. In things of far less moment, you are for haste and speed. If you were starving for want of Bread, you would think every hour long, 'till you had a supply. If your bodies were tortured and tormented with pain and sickness, would you think that ease and health might come too soon? If a man were in the Sea near sinking, can a Boat come too soon? Or can a condemn'd malefactor have his pardon too soon? hast thou lived without God, and Satan's slave, and in danger of dropping into Hell, fifteen or twenty years; and canst thou get into Christ to secure thy immortal soul too soon? Hast thou not been the Devil's too long already? suppose thou hadst died in thy Christless state, where had thy soul been? Is it not better to be the Lord's Servant, than Satan's slave? Ask the godly man that hath made trial, and he will tell thee. The sooner thou art in a state of Grace, the fitter thou wilt be for Glory. Make speed in thy work, do thy spiritual business;

ness; thy wages is sure, and thou shalt be blessed. Consider, there was never any one repented (living or dying) that they were the Lord's, and converted betimes.

And for you that have past the time of youth, in the satisfying youthful lusts, and liv'd, it may be thirty, forty or fifty years in a course of sin and vanity; is it not more than time for you, to bethink yourselves? In so many years you have made sad work; who can tell how often you have offended, that have been profane Swearers, Drunkards, Lyars, Sabbath-breakers, so long? If you were certain of living so many years to come, yet the Devil, the World, and your Hellish Lusts, have had half your time. O let the time past suffice; know, your times are in God's hands, *Psal. xxxi. 15.* so that you are not certain of a day to come: therefore begin and make speed in your work.

And for the grey-headed, against whom Death hath raised his batteries, you can have but a few sands in your glass, your departing hour cannot be far, your candle is within the socket, and it may be is come to a stinking snuff. Do you not see the Keepers of the old rotten house begin to tremble, and the strong men bow themselves? Expect the next blast the house to fall.

fall. If you that are leaning on your staves, and looking through your spectacles, being ready to enter upon Eternity, don't mind your work immediately, woe, woe be unto you for ever. If God should work a spiritual miracle, in converting and pardoning an old grey-headed sinner, that hath been idle 'till the eleventh hour, *Matt. xx. 6.* would it not be matter of amazement, and wonder, to men and Angels? for the Devil to be cast out of possession after he hath been an Inhabitant threescore years and more, for such a one to be born again, would be strange indeed. I have heard of an old man, who being really converted, not long before his death, caused this to be written upon his Tomb; *Here lieth a very aged man of THREE YEARS OLD.* He reckoned all his time and life before as lost, and worth nothing.

Now that you that have put off God, and hazarded your souls so long already, might lose no more time, consider these Motives.

1. *The present time is God's time, and must be yours.*
2. *God, the Righteous Judge, will reckon with you for your time.*
3. *You have solemnly promised to redeem it.*
4. *Men*

4. *Men take and improve opportunity for other things.*
5. *Satan, your deadly enemy, is always busy, and will lose no time.*
6. *Saving grace is an active and springing principle.*
7. *Time once had, and lost, cannot be recalled.*
8. *Conf. How they prize Time, that have lost it.*
9. *God hath joined Time and Duty together.*
10. *On this moment of Time Eternity depends.*

Motive 1. Consider, *The present time is God's, and it must be yours.* Don't you hear the Holy Ghost say, *It is now high time to seek the Lord*; and calling to you, *come away, make speed*? *Hos. x. 12.* Delays and Laziness, are the two great Gulphs, in which a multitude of Souls are drowned, and perish. How many are now in Hell, that purposed and promised to turn to God (as you do) hereafter? O fear and tremble, lest it should be your case. To enforce this, take these few hints.

1. The present time hath most Precepts; and God's commands, like Warrants in the King's name, must be obey'd on sight thereof. We say, *Must is for the*

King: If thou art young, read *Eccles.* xii. 1. Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth. To-day if you will hear his voice, harden not your hearts. *Psal.* xcv. 7. First seek the Kingdom of God, *Mat.* vi. 33. You must not stay long, *Hos.* xiii. 13. Bless God, and wonder the golden thread of precious time is spinned out so long.

2. It hath most promises, and they are great and precious; *I will receive you*, saith the Lord. *They that seek me early shall find me.* The present time is an accepted time, in which God may be found, *Psal.* xxii. 6. Now God calls, *Heb.* iii. 7. and you may come and welcome, *John* vi. 37. And it will be matter of unspeakable comfort to a man dying, and looking into Eternity, to know he hath done the work for which he had his life and time.

3. You have the best examples. And 'tis your duty to imitate and follow them who are gone to Heaven before. Your dear Lord would lose no time; *I must do the work of him that sent me, while it is day.* When faithful *Abraham* was to offer his son *Isaac*, he made haste, *Gen.* xxii. 3. he rose up early in the morning. *Mary Magdalen* came early in the morning to enquire after, and to see the Lord Jesus, whom her soul lov'd, *Mark* xvi. 2.

Motive

Motive 2. *God the righteous Judge will reckon with you for your time.* Not only for your health, wealth, strength, parts, graces, memories, but for every minute of your time. If at the day of Judgment we must give an account for every idle word, much more for so great a talent, so rich a treasure as Time. A Heathen could say, that every wise man must *tam otii quam negotii rationem reddere*, give an account of his business, and of his idleness. You may, like fools, waste your time, neglect your duty, and stand out against the call of God; but it will cost you dear; *Eccles. xi. 9. Rejoice, O young man in thy youth, and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth; and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee unto judgment.* The great Landlord of your time is at great expence to continue it. Those luminaries of Heaven, over your heads; and principally, the Prince of all the Lights of Heaven, the Sun, that glorious and mighty Giant, the Prince and Crown of all Corporal Creatures, do tire, and waste (as it were) their Cœlestial vigour, to beget and give time. Time is so rich a Jewel, that God would have no man va-

lue it to another. If one man had hurt another, he was to pay both for his cure, and loss of time, *Exod. xxi. 18, 19.* So must you, at the great day of account, for all your Time, for every Sermon you have heard, for every Sabbath and Sacrament you have had all your days.

Motive 3. *You have all promised to redeem your Time.* The vows of *Jehovah* are upon you. Say with *David*, *I will pay my Vows.* If the godly man will perform his promise to his hurt, *Pfal. xv. 4.* much more should you for your profit. Take the Counsel of the wise man, *Eccles. v. 4, 5.* *When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it. Pay that which thou hast vowed: better it is that thou shouldst not vow, than to vow and not pay.* How often you have engag'd yourselves to leave your known sins, and to live soberly, and righteously, and godly in this present world, let Conscience witness. If you that have resolved to read, pray, sanctify the Sabbath, &c. should still waste and trifle away the time, it will not only be a breach of promise, but a sin against Light, for which thy heart will reproach thee; *and if thine heart condemn thee, God is greater than thine heart, and knoweth all things, 1 John iii. 20.* Remember the promises thou didst

didst make at such a Sacrament, or when struck at the heart by such and such a Sermon ; or when death was in thy family, or thyself near unto it ; and defer not to perform thy Covenant : God, who is a God of Truth, will not be mocked ; and that you shall know ere it be long. *Jephtha* would perform his vow to God ; *I have*, said he, *opened my mouth unto the Lord, I cannot go back*, Judg. xi. 34, 35. *Herod* for his oath sake, murdered *John the Baptist*, Mat. xiv. 9, 10. How many times hast thou engaged to dedicate and devote thyself to God and his service ? Therefore say, *Lord, for my promise sake I will sacrifice myself, and become thine, redeeming my time, for thy glory, and mine own salvation.*

Motive 4. Conf. *Men take and improve opportunities for other things.* The fittest and best time is taken for buying, selling, plowing, sowing, and gathering into Barns ; and especially in evil and hard times. Men will rise early, run, ride, and labour in the very fire, as the Prophet speaketh. *Redeeming the time*, 'tis a Metaphor taken from Merchants, that will be early in the Market, lest the opportunity of buying the best Commodities should be lost. The Proverb is, *That time and tide stays for no man ; and that we must make hay while*

while the Sun shineth. There is none but a sluggard will sleep in Harvest; the diligent Husbandman will not lose a day then. Christians, in this great affair of your precious, immortal, and never-dying souls do as men about other things. Millers and Mariners, observe and improve every gale of wind; yea, the Stork in the Heaven, the Turtle, the Crane, and the Swallow, know and observe the time of their coming, *Jer. viii. 7.* They that say, to-day or to-morrow, we will go into such a city, and buy, and sell, and get gain, *Jam. iv. 12.* will, as we say, turn every stone, and lose no time to buy a good bargain, to make a rich purchase; And shall not we redeem our time, and make the best of our spiritual markets, to make provision for our souls, that are more worth than all the world.

Motive 5. *Satan, that Enemy and grand Soul-deluder, is always busy.* He is an active Devil, and he loveth to find us idle. Christians, this old Serpent is never more at work, than when we are idle: for idleness layeth a man open to all his hellish snares and temptations; and then if temptations come, you are out of God's way; and if Satan find you on his ground, he will be too hard for you. The Apostle tells

tells us he goeth about, and still offers temptations for the wasting of our time. This roaring Lion hath a large Circuit; for ever since he was cast out of Heaven, he hath been going to and fro in the earth, and walking up and down in it, *Job. i. 7.* His grand design is to devour, *1 Pet. v. 8.* This black Prince loves to prey upon precious souls; the soul being that sweet morsel he is still gaping at. This adversary hath his several walks, he is in the shop, in the market, in the street, in the chamber, in the closet, and every where, where sin is; and he is also in the Congregation among the Assemblies of the Saints, when they are about spiritual service. When *Joshua*, the High-priest, stood before the Lord, Satan was standing at his right-hand to resist him, *Zeck. iii. 1.* This deadly enemy, was with Christ and his Disciples at the Passover, for there he entered into *Judas*, *John xiii. 26, 27.* Therefore, Christians, we have need to work and watch too.

The Devil, that hates you and all mankind, doth bestir himself; he goeth forth into the broad way of profaneness, and there he tenders, and tempts men with sensual objects; and he entereth into the by-path of error, appearing as an Angel
of

of Light, and enticeth wanton wits to suck down the poison of his damnable doctrine. And when once he hath injected his poison into the head, how much time is spent in writing and disputing to defend his delusions? We read, that it was while men slept, this enemy (Satan) came and sowed tares among the wheat, *Mat. xiii. 25, 39.* He is a working busy Devil, never at leisure, but is always spreading his baits, and casting his snares and nets to catch souls. Therefore be ye sober, be vigilant, and watch unto prayer, and employ this talent of precious Time well. Idleness is Satan's shop, and the mother of Mischief. *David* was at leisure, and on the roof of his house, when Satan prevailed by that sad temptation, *2 Sam. xi. 3.* Therefore set God always before you, keep in his way, and be doing your duty, that you may be kept from his fiery darts. The flying Bird is seldom shot; the cautious, diligent, active soul, is most secure.

Motive 6. *Time once gone, cannot be recalled.* Time past, is gone forever; Time present (if we may so call it) is going; future Time is most uncertain, neither Men or Angels can hinder, or stop it; turn, or bring it back again. If opportunities be
not.

not now taken, they may never be had. Be good Husbands of your time, and work now, or you may never work. Time's redemption, may be your salvation; therefore follow and improve the light, before darkness overtake you. You all know, that yesterday, or the last hour, will never come again. If thou hadst as much Treasure in thy custody or power as the whole world is worth, it cannot purchase one minute of time past. You that are old, may as easily call back your youth, or become young again, as recover any part of this precious time *Luke xix. 42.*

Motive 7. *The nature of saving grace, is working and springing up*; which turneth all the powers and Faculties of the Soul Heavenward. Such is the activity and vigour of this gracious nature, that it will bring a man to a *What wilt thou have me do?* *Act ix. 6. Eph. ii. 10.* 'Tis not a lazy and languid thing, but full of life and power. The state of sin in scripture is described by death and darkness, which are a cessation and privation of Life, and Light, and Motion; and the state of grace is described by Life, *Eph. ii.* which is powerful, and most vivacious like the sword of the Lord and *Gideon*, doing great things. It is no wonder to see men of the
world,

world, that are born after the flesh, to be dull, sluggish, and unactive. But you that have a divine nature, and a Spirit of life and power in your hearts, should be diligent and laborious, *2 Tim. i. 6. Rom. viii. 2.* This living principle of Grace, made the Holy Apostle, who excited others to redeem their time, so to employ his talent; the grace of God in him, made him labour more than they all, *1 Cor. xv. 10.* The streams of grace that flow into the soul are called *Rivers of Living Waters*, *John vii. 38.* and *a Well of water springing up unto eternal life*, *John iv. 14.* So that christians have greater advantage of doing good and of living to God's glory. Therefore stir up the grace of God that is in you; cast off slothfulness, and put on diligence; and laying aside every weight, rejoice (as the Sun) to run the race that is set before you.

Motive 8. Consider, *How highly they prize time, that have lost it, and are come to the end of it; and who, with the loss of time, have lost themselves.* We have many dreadful examples, that stand as so many Sea-marks, to warn us to take heed.

The poor *Jews* were utterly undone by it. The Lord only knows how many of them are now in flames, that suffer the vengeance of eternal fire, for not improving

ing the day of grace, *Luke* xix. 42. *Mat.* xxiii. 37. The foolish Virgins having lost the opportunity of buying oil, came too late to the door. And *Esau* staid too long to get the blessing; Most do things when it is too late. Men go to bed late, rise late, go to Market late, come to Church late, and make peace with God when it is too late. The old *Israelites* marched towards *Canaan* when it was too late, and so lost that good Land. O how dreadful will mercy slighted, and time lost, be to the awakened soul, when it comes to die, seeing itself in a Christless state! It was a speech once of a woman in terror of Conscience, when divers Ministers and others came to her in a way of comforting her, she looks with a gasty countenance upon them, and gives them this answer, *Call back Time again; if you can call back Time again, then there may be hope for me: but Time is gone.* Another great Lady, upon her death-bed, cried out, *All too late, all too late, a World of Wealth for an inch of Time.* Another Gentlewoman, (of whom I have heard) who was wont to employ this precious talent of Time, in playing at Cards, and such like Games, coming from her sport late in the night, finding her waiting-maid, (that was religious) reading

reading in a good Book ; and casting he eyes in the book over the Maid's shoulder, speaks these words, or to this effect, *Thou poor melancholy soul ! what always reading, and spending thy time thus ! wilt thou take no comfort in thy life ?* The Gentlewoman retiring to her Chamber, went to bed. The Maid lodging in the same room, perceived her Mistress under great disquiet and perturbation of Spirit, sighing, and groaning bitterly. The Servant hearing of it, several times call'd to her, to know the reason she could not sleep : the maid urging of her, at last she cried out, and said, *I read this word ETERNITY in thy Book, which hath so pierced my heart, that I believe I shall never sleep more, till I have a better assurance of mine eternity.* Another wanton Lady, that had wasted her time in sensuality, who died not many weeks past, told her vitious Mother, standing by her bedside, *That it was too late to speak of God to her ; for you have undone me, and I am going to Hell before, and you will certainly come after.* It is common with many dying, and going into the other world, sadly to bewail the loss of time. When they fear Mercy is going, Patience expiring, and the time respited for Repentance over, then they prize opportunities

at

at another rate. And O what would the damned in Hell give to be admitted into the world, if they might but enjoy one day or hour, to deliver themselves from that dreadful place of torment! *Luke xvi. 27, 28.*

Motive 9. Consider, *God hath joined Time and Duty together*: and that in two respects;

1. In respect of Assistance.

2. In respect of Acceptance.

1. God hath joined Time and Duty together, in respect of assistance: and what Infinite Majesty hath joined, must not by any means be separated. Work and Time, Opportunity and Duty, must go together; *Adam* had his work in *Paradise*, before the fall. And the second *Adam* was always in action, to the end of his days. His meat and drink was to do the will of his Father. *Nullus mihi per otium dies exit*, I have no day for Idleness, was the language of an Heathen. Christians, do your work in season, and you shall have assistance. God's opportunity is as wind to the sails, or as oil to the wheels, which will make you glide through difficult duties with much facility. If we work in God's time, God will work with us, and we shall be workers together with him. Gospel-time is in order to Gospel-work; spiritual opportunities

nities are appointed and continued for spiritual duties. The work of Faith, Repentance, Mortification of sin, the plucking out right eyes, the chopping off right arms, fighting and wrestling with the powers and Prince of darkness, are exceeding difficult: but God, whose arm is potent, will give power: and how easily will great work or service be done, when there is great assistance in the doing of it? A burthen that is too heavy for one to lift, by the help of another will come up easily. This *Paul* witnesseth, *Phil. iv. 13. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.* The feeble *Jews*, by the help of *Jehovah*, raised up the walls of *Jerusalem*, from its very rubbish, and that in spite of all opposition, *Neb. iv. 2, 3. and vi. 15.* they plying the work, the Lord was with them by his great power and strong hand: they made their prayer unto God, when strength was almost decayed, and laboured in the work from the rising of the morning, till the stars appeared, and so the wall was finished. Let time be redeemed, and then a great deal of work may be done in a little time: God's opportunity will make believing and repenting easy, *Luke xix. 6. Acts ii. 37, 41.*
Acts

Acts xvi. 14, 34. O therefore while it is day, work out your salvation; for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do, of his good pleasure, *Phil.* ii. 12. 13.

2. God hath joined Time and Duty, in respect of Acceptance. Every Time is not an accepted time, *2 Cor.* vi. 2. The *Israelites* that refused to march up to *Canaan* at God's command, lost their opportunity, and afterward he would neither assist them, nor accept them. If thou stayest till God's time be past and gone, art thou sure God will accept thee hereafter? There is a time when God will not be found, will not be spoken withal, *Isa.* lv. 6. *Esau* sought the blessing with tears, and it was denied him, *Heb.* xii. 17. *Prov.* i. 29. Do not say, what need so much speed? What need so much improving of Time, so much reading, hearing, praying, preaching? But resolve upon thy duty now or never.

Motive 10. Lastly, consider, *That on the present moment of time eternity depends.* This deep and heart-affecting Meditation should even swallow us up, and cause us to hasten unto our work. Let go time's opportunity, and you will certainly be ruined to all eternity. The
Painter

Painter being asked why he was so exact in drawing his Lines; answered, *I paint for eternity*. Consider, that thou must believe and repent for eternity; hear and pray for Eternity; fear, love, obey for Eternity. A work of *infinite moment*, depends on a *moment of time*. This day thou mayst through thy last cast for eternity. This swift Post will not stop, no, not for a moment. Secure Soul! dost thou see Eternity before thee, even at thy door, and that there is but a step between thee and an endless state; and wilt thou not be more industrious for thy soul and Heaven? if a man were to run or wrestle for his life, or for a Crown, or Kingdom; how would he strain, and strive, and that with all his might. If a man were to go over Sea for his life, and had but one gale of Wind in his lifetime, would he come to the waterside and lose it? If a Malefactor had but a day appointed him to sue out his pardon, would he not improve it? This is all our cases: God hath given us but a day to work; when the day is ended, it will be night for ever, *Luke xix. 19, 42. John ix. 4.* Now, it may be, Christ is at the door, offering thee help; open to him, lest he with-draw, and come no more. It is probable

probable the Spirit of Life and Power, striveth to turn to God, O refuse not to comply with it, lest the Spirit serve thee, as *Samuel* did *Saul*, that came no more to him, 1 *Sam.* xv. 35. I shall conclude the Motives with the words of the *Psalmist*, *To day if you will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, lest God swear in his wrath, that you shall not enter into his rest*, *Psal.* xci. 7.—11.

Now if thou art resolved to put this duty into practice; through the help of Heaven, speedily and diligently observe these directions.

Directions for the redeeming of Time.

1. *Take heed and beware of those things which rob you of your time.*
2. *Labour to convince yourselves of the worth of time, and value it accordingly.*
3. *Set apart a considerable portion of time for the most secret duties.*
4. *Cast up and compute your time.*
5. *Maintain a holy fear upon thy heart, of coming to the end of time before thy work be done.*

Direct. 1. First, *Take heed of those things which rob you of your time.* Now the Thieves that will rob you of this exceeding rich Jewel, are these six; against which, watch as for thy life.

D

1. *Vain*

1. *Vain Thoughts.*
2. *Worldly Cares.*
3. *Unnecessary Visits.*
4. *Unprofitable Discourse.*
5. *Excessive indulging the outward man.*
6. *Unlawful or immoderate Recreations.*

1. *Vain Thoughts.* These are secret and subtil Thieves, that insensibly rob us of our time every day, and in every duty : Vain impertinent. and wicked thoughts, like *Pharoah's* Frogs, creep and crowd in upon us, and thrust out good thoughts ; so that we cannot keep our mind steady and compos'd. *Solomon* saith, *Prov. xvii. 24. The eyes of a fool are in the ends of the earth ;* so are our thoughts, gadding, wandering up and down, here and there, and every where. These evil thoughts spring and rise from within us, as naturally as sparks from the fire, *Gen. vi. 5. Mat. xv. 19. Out of the Heart proceed evil thoughts.* And they follow us continually in every place, and in every Service, as the Birds on *Abraham's* Sacrifices, which *Abraham* did drive away. They must not lodge, *Jer. iv. 14.* Though we cannot hinder the Fowls from flying in the Air, or over our heads ; we may hinder them from pitching on
our

heads. Holy *David* had vain thoughts, but he hated them, *Psal.* cxix. 113. There's not a minute, but many thoughts pass from us, as in a minute, sands do in an hour-glass, *Psal.* xciv. 19. Christians, consider how much of that time is lost, which you spend in holy duties, by vain thoughts; when we should draw nigh to God, our hearts, by our thoughts, steal away. And there are but a few awakened tender spirits, truly sensible of this intrinsical secret evil; though much of a Christian's duty, and the very inwards of Religion, lies in observing the thoughts, and in watching the heart. Therefore above all keeping, keep thy Heart; *Prov.* iv. 23. and take heed to thy Spirit, *Mal.* ii. 15. 16.

2. *Worldly Cares* are great wasters of our precious time. The most do mind earthly things, *Phil.* iii. 19. Men's heads, hearts, and thoughts, are so intent about the things that perish, that they do hardly entertain a serious thought of God, and Eternity, all the day. God is not in all their thoughts. They that are of the flesh, do mind the things of the flesh, *Rom.* viii. 5. and not only the children of this World; but Professors themselves, are so eager and vehement in the pursuit

of this poor earth, that almost all their time and strength is spent about it. And while men are so careful and sollicitous about many things, and in a very crowd and hurry of business, it is impossible for them to redeem time for God and their Souls. As soon as their eyes are open, and the things of the World stand as so many Suitors, to invite and draw them. Some have their hearts so over-charged and surfeited with the cares and fears of this evil World, that their abundance will not suffer them to sleep, *Luke xxi. 4. Eccles. v. 12.* Now when it is thus, Opportunities are lost, Souls are neglected, Holy duties omitted, or if used, they are very unsuccessful, *Ezek. xxxiii. 31. Mat. xiii. 22.* Therefore take heed of the World, so great a devourer of time.

3. *Unnecessary Visits*, are great wasters of our time; of which you must take heed, it being no mark of Godliness, but the contrary. The wise man speaking of the vicious and virtuous Woman, giveth them this different Character, *viz.* the one, *her feet abideth not in her house*, *Eccles. vii. 11.* the other, *looketh well to the way of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness*, *Prov. xxxi. 27.* And we read of some, that wandered about from house to house,

their Lord; the words that proceeded out of his mouth were gracious words; *Walk in wisdom towards them that are without, redeeming the Time. Let your speech be always with Grace, seasoned with Salt, that you may know how you ought to answer every man,* Col. iv. 5, 6.

5. *Excessive indulging the outward man.* Much of our time is spent in making provision for the flesh, *Rom. i. ult.* Some hours every day are taken up in providing for the belly, to please the palate; and some at their tables take up much time. Others, to gratify a proud fancy, much time is wasted in decking and trimming the body. There are those that spend more time in looking into a glass, than upon their knees in praying to God. A Godly Minister coming to a gentlewoman's house to dinner, where he waited from ten a clock till one, all the while she was dressing; burst out into weeping, to think that she should spend so much time in *Trimming*, and he so little in *Praying*. Also excessive sleep doth devour great part of our short time and life. When we should be on our knees in our Closet, we are in our Beds, or on our Couches. Others waste their precious time in Ale-houses and Taverns, and
Brothel-

Brothel-houses, from day to day; God's day being not exempted. Against such there is a dreadful Woe, *Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink; that continue until night, till Wine inflame them, Isa. v. 11, 12.*

6. *Unlawful and immoderate Recreations*, are the occasions of great expence of time. Recreation (not to be used but as Physic in case of need) is an ingrosser and waster of our time, that is dear and precious. Many are so excessive in it, as if they were sent into the World to do nothing but to sport. What time is spent in Carding, Dicing, Dancing, Interludes, Stage-plays, Bear and Bull-baitings, Hunting, Hawking, and in reading Romantic Books? Which for men and woman professing the Gospel, are not of good report, *Phil. iv. 8.* the turning of the Bible, or some good Book, is more becoming a Christian than turning a pack of Cards, a game so much accustomed by the Prophane, and an occasion of much sin. These things will cause bitterness and horror at last; they are honey to the Fancy, but a sting to the Conscience. Consider which will afford most comfort dying; *Item*, so many days in Recreation, or so many days in Humiliation; so many

hours of Prayer, or so many hours in playing at Cards; so many hours in vain filthy discourse, or so many hours in serious and heavenly conference: *Item*, so many Sabbaths in reading, hearing, and singing of Psalms, or so many Sabbaths spent in eating, drinking, walking, or worse. Holy *Bradford* counted that hour lost, wherein he had not done some good. *Titus Vespasian* was wont to say, *Diem perdidit*, I have lost a day.

Direct. 2 *Set a due estimate upon this precious Jewel of Time*, that your hearts may be so truly tender, as to make conscience of wasting of it. A godly Minister was wont to say, when he saw the morning clear and serene, *'Tis pity this day should be lost*. O value your time, reckon more of one Sabbath, than of the best Fair or Market that ever thou wast at in all thy life. Set upon the now day of Grace, the price of Eternity. I have told you already, the damned in Hell (if it might be) would give a world for one opportunity to make peace with God.

Direct. 3. *Set apart some considerable portion of Time, for the most secret Duties.*

1. For

1. For ordinary secret Prayer and Meditation, set some time apart in the morning and evening of every day; and do not catch and snatch at praying times. Many serve the world and the flesh all day, and put off God with a few words or sleepy Prayers at night. Prayer is the breath of the new creature, and the sign of a spiritual life, *Acts ix. 6.* Christians, let your Prayers be secret, sincere, fervent, and constant. The way to Heaven (said a good man) is thro' the Closet, and they that have been eminent in Piety, have been excellent in Prayer. Holy *David* would not let a morning pass without Prayer, *Psal. v. 3.* yea, three times a day he was at this blessed duty, *Psal. lv. 17.* It was his element, and constant employment, *Psal. cix. 4.* Your Prayer must be fervent, if it be effectual. Prayer without fervency, is as a Bullet without Powder, or as a Bird without wings, that cannot mount up into the Air. Holy fire must be put to thy daily Sacrifice. God answers by fire. He that looks upon the heart, regards the manner of your Prayers more than the number of your Prayers. Cold slight mumbling over a few petitions, either out of custom, or to stop the mouth of Conscience, will not prevail,

Psal. xxv. 10. *Isa.* xxvi. 9. *Jam.* v. 16. Christians, the time that you spend with God in secret, is the sweetest time, and best improved. Therefore, if thou lovest thy life, be in love with Prayer. Resolve to spend some time with God in Private every day.

2. Extraordinary private fasting, is a duty very necessary, and practised but by a few. Soul-afflicting days between God and a man's self, would, through Grace, be much for spiritual advantage; Husbands would mourn apart, and their Wives apart, *Zech.* xii. 12, 13. Fasting days will be Soul-fattening days, *Acts.* x. 30. and *Blessed are they that mourn*, *Matt.* v. 4.

3. The third private duty is Self-examination. When thou art alone, ask thyself these questions:

1. Is it most certain that I am in a state of Grace?

2. Is Grace thriving? doth my inward man prosper?

3. Do I live in no known sin against Conscience, *Psal.* xix. 1, 28. and exercise myself unto Godliness?

4. Do I make Conscience of redeeming time, so as to join Time and Duty together? A precious servant of the Lord was wont to say, if a man could answer

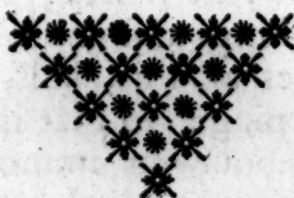
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to these two questions, he need not to fear : First, *Am I God's Child?* Secondly, *Am I in God's way?* Psal. cxix. 94.

Direct. 4. *If you would redeem your time, compute your time.* Pray thou mayest do it, Psal. xc. 12. Psal. xxxix. 4. Numbering the people was *David's* sin; but numbering his days a duty. 'Tis common for men to number their Sheep, their Cattle, Houses, Lands, Wares, Money, but to number our Days is a rare kind of numbering : for the neglect of which, what arrears are we fallen into, with the great Landlord of our time? Christians divide your time into parcels, and consider how little God hath : how much time was spent in thy infancy and child-hood, before thou hadst the use of Reason ; how much is spent in our callings and employments about the World? How much in eating, drinking, and unprofitable discourse? besides all this, half, or more, is spent in sleeping : so that in the work of God, and about our immortal souls, we employ but a very little : Therefore 'tis more than time to redeem it.

Direct. 5. *Maintain always a holy fear upon thy heart of coming to the end of Time,*
D 6 *before*

before thy work be done. Live continually in an expectation of your great change. Buy, sell, converse, read, pray, hear, and do all as dying men, and passing to receive the recompence of endless Joy, or Woe. Christians, if you would work while it is day; if you would glorify God on earth; if you would secure, and eternally save your immortal souls; if you would not be a prey to the Prince of darkness; if you would stand with comfort before the Lord Jesus, at his dreadful Bar; if you would not spend your days without hope: Arise therefore, and be doing, and the Lord be with you.





Deut. xxxii. 29.

O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end.

IT's always seasonable to insist on such subjects as direct us to speak of another World, especially in times of great sickness and mortality, in which thousands of souls, night and day, have been crowding into Eternity (witness the late dreadful Plague in sixty-five.) I therefore made choice of this serious and heart-wakening Subject, that drowsy secure souls might be awakened to a deep consideration of the World to come. The whole Chapter is stiled the Song of *Moses*, his Swan-like Song; or Song before his death, the dying words of that eminent faithful Servant of God; and if the words of a dying man are to be regarded, how much the words of a dying *Moses*? This *Moses* being ready to go into the other World, composeth this Song, of which
the

the Text is a part; and dying words are weighty, and make the deepest impression,

The Song is partly { *Narratory,*
Minatory,
Promissory,

In the Narrative you have,

1. A Narration of the infinite greatness, and most glorious attributes of the God of *Israel*, introduced with a pathetic and awakening acclamation, *Give ear, O ye Heavens, and I will speak; and bear O Earth the words of my mouth.*

2. We have a Narration of their corruption, ingratitude, and rebellion, *ver. 5, 6. They have corrupted themselves, they are a perverse and crooked Generation, do ye thus requite the Lord. O foolish people, and unwise? Notwithstanding the remarkable favours, and rare indulgence of God toward them, yet they forsook him, provoked him to jealousy with strange Gods, and sacrificed to Devils, and not unto God, ver. 16, 17. Because of which he threatens,*

1. *To hide his face from them,* than which nothing more bitter to the Soul; *ver. 20.*

2. *To inflict variety of sore temporal judgments upon them; than which nothing*

thing more burthensome to the body. *I will heap mischief upon them, I will spend mine Arrows upon them; they shall be burnt with hunger, and devoured with burning heat, and with bitter destruction the sword without, and terror within, shall destroy both the Young-man, and the Virgin, with the man of grey hairs; for a fire is kindled in mine anger, and shall burn to the lowest Hell.* And ver. 27. God gives the reason why he would not utterly destroy them, and make a full end of them. *Were it not that I feared the wrath of the enemy, &c.*

And now the words of the Text seem to be the application of the whole, *O that they would consider their latter end!*

You may look upon these words as it were a mount cast up, by which the people of *Israel* might take a view of things to come, and have a prospect of what should befall them in their latter end. *O that they were wise!* to be wise is opposed to that brutishness, ver. 28. They were a Nation void of Counsel, for they wanted the right exercise of Reason, and that Wisdom which is from above to observe and improve the Gracious Providences and Dispensations of God.

That they would consider: Consideration is a fixed act of the understanding, or mind,

mind, in order to practice; for doing and considering are frequently joined together, *Judges xviii. 4. Now therefore consider what ye have to do, Heb. x. 24. Let us consider one another to provoke unto love and good works.* The same thing is variously expressed in Scripture, *viz.* to look narrowly upon a thing, to call to mind, to know and to consider in ones heart, to call things to remembrance, to commune with a man's heart, *Psal. lxxvii. 5, 6.*

Their latter end: By which we are not only to understand those tremendous, and desolating Judgments that should surprize them in this world, but to remember the great things of the other; as also Old Age, Death, the Grave, Eternity; Death, with its Antecedents, concomitants, and consequences,

The words contain a pathetical Option or wish, *O that they were wise!* In which observe.

1. *The person wishing, viz.* the most great and gracious God.

2. *The thing desired,* and that is, divine Wisdom: a Jewel indeed, a price far above Rubies.

3. *The persons for which God thus desireth, viz.* For Israel, a people nigh to the

the Lord, and yet a brutish, inconsiderate, and unwise people. O that they were wise, &c.

4. *What this Wisdom is, wherein it doth consist, viz. in the consideration of their latter end.*

The Doctrines observable from the words, are these :

Doct. 1. *That God doth earnestly desire and long for the good of a people.*

Doct. 2. *That an inconsiderate people are a foolish and unwise people.*

Doct. 3. *That wont of serious consideration is incident not only to the prophane, but to men professing God, and Godliness.* The Israelites were the only church of God then in the World, and yet they were not wise to understand, and consider their latter end.

I shall not handle this part, but speak to the chief scope and intent of the words, in this one Proposition.

Doct. *That it is a duty and matter of high concernment to consider our latter end.* O that they were wise ! that they would consider, viz, practically consider, and live always in the belief of the other World, so as to do up all their work while it is day ! this seems to be the great import of the spirit of God in this Text.

Eternal

Eternal Souls; whatever escapeth your thoughts, this must not; this should be your *vade mecum*; it should rise up with you, lie down with you, walk with you wherever you go or are. This *Moses* himself, that precious and renowned servant of God desir'd, seeing such a dreadful mortality in the Wilderness, and so many sad spectacles of Divine Wrath, *Psal. xc. 12. So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts to wisdom.* And as *Moses* desired it, so also holy *David*, *Psal. xxxix. 4. Lord, make me to know my end; and the measure of my days what it is, that I may know how frail I am.* And *Solomon* sets a *better* upon it. *Eccl. vii. 2. It is better to go to the house of mourning, than to the house of feasting: for that is the end of all men, and the living will lay it to his heart.* And it is an argument that men are dead, when at a house of mourning they are not moved with compassion, to a due and deep consideration of their doleful and dying condition.

I shall come now to shew you what we are to consider, concerning our latter end: and O that it may take a deep impression upon all that read these plain truths!

Seriouſly

Seriously consider, and believe.

1. *That it is most certain that an end will be.* For whatsoever the Scriptures speak of Death, the Grave, and Hell, is an infallible truth. You are to consider, that every man is mortal, must die, and pass into the other World ; and that in every one of your bodies, there is an immortal and never dying soul ; and that after these bodies have slept in the dust of the earth, they shall live again ; there shall be a resurrection of the just, and unjust ; and at the end of the World, a Tribunal shall be set up, before which, all the World shall be made to stand. And that as soon as your breath is gone, the spirit shall return to God that gave it, either to the Justice of God, or to the Mercy of God ; to the place of Joy, or to the place of Torment.

Our transgression, natural constitution, with a Statute Law of Heaven, have brought us under a necessity of dying. Wherever the Viper fastneth, it killeth certainly, though not suddenly ; sin and death are twins, sin is the great murderer that let death into the world ; *for her house inclineth unto death, and her paths unto the dead. In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die, Gen. ii. 17.*
viz.

viz. thou shalt become mortal. As soon as *Adam* had sinned, he (and we in him our representative) became subject, or liable to death: Sin, like a mighty Monarch, reign'd from *Adam* to *Moses*: A Malefactor cast at the Bar, is dead in Law, though he be reprieved for a time; *the body* (saith the Apostle) *is dead because of sin*: some die in the womb, some in their infancy, some in their youth, and they that live longest, die at last: death never hurts a man, but with his own weapon, it always finds sin in us, and *the sting of death is sin*. And wherever you meet it, or see it, you may say of it as *Ahab* to the Prophet; *hast thou found me, O mine Enemy?* Death, and every death is the fruit of sin, death temporal, death spiritual, and death eternal: *The soul that sins shall die*, Ezek. xviii. 20. *The wages of sin is death*, Rom. vi. 23. Our natural constitution rendreth us obnoxious to a dissolution; our flesh is not the flesh of stone, or of brass; but frail and mouldring dust, to which, as to our center we must return, Gen. iii. 19. *Dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return*, Eccl. iii, 20. *All go to one place, all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again*, Heb. ix. 27. *It is appointed for man once to die*. Job xiv. 5.

xiv. 5. *His days are determined, the number of his months are with thee, thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass.* No shield or buckler can fortify against this King of Terrors; impartial Death (the great Leveller) knows no faces; and therefore none can be exempted. If faithfulness might challenge immunity from death, then *Moses* might have been excused; if beauty, then *Absalom*; if strength, then *Sampson*; if sincerity and piety, then *David*; if subtilty, then *Achitophel*; if magnanimity, then *Alexander*; if riches, then *Cræsus*; if wisdom, then *Solomon*; but one event happens to them all; so that when the fatal moment cometh, no ransom can be given, no art nor skill can keep us here. Sirs, were this Doctrine of the other world believed, it would have a greater impresson upon our hearts; did we seriously consider of that future state of retribution, according to our faith, of which we must live or die, stand or fall to eternity, it would have a greater influence upon our lives.

2. Confid. *That at your latter end, all things in this World will fail you, and take their leave of you for ever.* All your natural

tural endowments, outward enjoyments, parts, parentage, birth, breeding, wit, wealth, crowns, kingdoms, pearls, diamonds, houses, lands, wives, children, friends; when your breath is gone, all these are gone, *Prov. xxvii. 24. Riches are not for ever, neither doth a crown endure to all Generations.* The glittering Sun of all outward glory will certainly set, which your own experience, and Scripture evidence, doth clearly evince. *Riches have wings, and they fly away, Prov. iii. 5. The fashion of this World passeth away, 1 Cor. vii. 29, 30, 31. We brought nothing into the World; and 'tis certain we shall carry nothing out, 1 Tim. vi. 7.* If a man were possessed with as much of this world, as *Solomon* the great King of *Jerusalem*, who had great magnificent buildings, fruitful pleasant vineyards, gardens, orchards, and trees of all manner of fruits, variety of servants, possessions of great and small Cattle, heaps of Gold and Silver, peculiar treasure of Kings, musical instruments, men and women singers, and whatsoever his eyes desired; yet when he takes a serious view of all things, he would say with him, *all is vanity*, and that a man hath no profit of all his labour which he taketh under the Sun,

Sun, which made the wise man even to hate life, *Eccles.* ii.

Since the Fall, there is a curse upon the creature, which indeed is deceiving, vexing, decaying, and all outward comforts may be compared to *Pharaoh's* host, who are alive this hour and the next drowned, and dead upon the Sea-shore: and tho' you judge they shall endure for ever, *Psal.* xlix. 11. *Luke* xii. 19. they will deal by you as *Abalom's* Mule, that left him in his greatest extremity. What woeful miseries attend worldly riches in the getting, keeping, and parting with them? they are snares and thorns, plagues and scorpions unto many; they pierce them through with many sorrows, 1 *Tim.* vi. 10.

Yet here men toil, beat their brains, weary their bodies, tire their spirits, break their sleep, perplex their thoughts, rack their consciences, ingulph and drown themselves in cares, endanger their souls (dreaming of nothing but perpetuity :) and when they have done all, like the silk-worm, die in their work: nay, many a man survives his own happiness; which perisheth before he perisheth; and it's the worst of miseries to outlive our own happiness: therefore let not Riches
heighten

heighten your hearts, and prompt you to pride, which is too common.

This day the rich Worldling sang a *requiem* to his sadly deluded soul, concluding he had much laid up: the night following, his soul is required. *Haman* is to day the second man in the Kingdom, but soon lost all, and his life too. How doth *Nebuchadnezzar* walk in his stately Royal Palace of *Babel*, priding himself in his outward pomp; but while the word was in his mouth, a Voice came from Heaven, saying; O King *Nebuchadnezzar*, to thee be it spoken, thy Kingdom is departed from thee, Dan. iv. 29, 30, 31.

Jerusalem this year is the Princess among the Provinces, the next year made tributary; and they that lived delicately are desolate, and embrace dunghills, Lam. i. 1. and iv. 5. Yesterday, *Job's* Cattle might be numbered by thousands, and to-morrow he is stripped of all, and left naked. Neither is our age without a sad and dreadful instance (*viz.*) famous *London*, on the Lord's day standing, by *Wednesday* burnt, and laid in ashes, and thousands of the Inhabitants Houseless and Harbourless; therefore if Riches increase, set not your hearts upon them; they are uncertain, cannot satisfy, cannot

not profit ; will perish, and that for ever ;
 O then let those precious, dear, everlasting Jewels, laid up in your mouldring, decaying, dying bodies be cared for ! *What can it profit a man, to gain the whole world, and lose his own soul ?* Mat. xvi. 26.

3. Consider, *How soon all the present pleasures of sin will be gone, and leave nothing but a sting.* Old age, weakness, sickness, will make a great change in the whole outward man, as to beauty, strength, natural vigour, liveliness of senses, and all whereby a man might take any pleasure in the World, or in his Lusts. When sickness, old age, death's fore-runner cometh, it will make a strange change in the most comely countenance ; corporal comeliness and beauty is soon stain'd, sickness will not only fade it, but deface it : You that are endowed with comely proportion, sparkling eyes, well-favouredness, amiableness of colours of white and red, with straitness and agility of body, with a cheerful aspect : when old-age cometh, it will plow deep furrows in those fair faces ; and yet many (ignorant of their foul souls and filthy hearts) are proud of their fair faces, and comely features ; so that they grow wan-

ton by reason of it, and to set out their beauty and whiteness of their skins (not being contented with their Creator's curious make) will add painting, patches, powdering, crisping, curling, artificial hair, and what not? Know, that old age will not only wither your beauty (which is but skin deep) but abate your outward strength, natural vigour, liveliness of senses, and all whereby you may have any worldly pleasure.

Old age is *Solomon's evil day*, when he Sun, Moon, and Stars will be darkened, the keepers of the house tremble, and the strong men bow themselves, and the grinders cease, and all the daughters of music shall be brought low, and fear shall be in the way; when the whole outward man is decayed, *viz.* eyes dim and dark, ears deaf, teeth rotten, gums bare, head bald, breath corrupt, hands and feet weak and trembling; an evil day indeed, in which you shall find no delight in your former dalliances, for the Grasshopper will be a burden, and desire shall fail, *Eccl. xii.* But the beauty of Grace withers not under the greatest declinings of natural beauty; for Grace is the Oil in the Lamp, that never goeth out, but shineth more and more. *The King's*

King's Daughter is all glorious within, Psal. xlv. Godliness, which is God's likeness, casts a lustre that is very lovely in the sight of God and Man. Thou art all fair my Dove, and there is no spot in thee.

Sinners ! you that now taste the sweet of sin, rejoice to do wickedly, that spend your time in riotous drunkenness, in chambers of wantonness, lie upon beds of Ivory, and stretch yourselves on your couches, and eat the Lambs out of the flock, that chant to the sound of the Viol, that drink wine in bowls, that are not griev'd for the afflictions of *Joseph*, that put far away the evil day ; know that the fire of sin will burn, and that your sweet morsels are but for a moment ; those sweet morsels, and delicate dainties, will cost you dear.

Hear now this, you that are given to pleasure, that feast yourselves in doing evil ; 'tis but a little time, and you will see and say, that all your delights, hopes, joys, are past and gone, and that you shall never see or taste them more, only the gravel, gall, guilt, and sting will remain. You that love this hellish Banquet of sin (the stolen waters that are sweet, and bread eaten in secret that's pleasant) don't know that the dead are

there, and that her guests are in the depths of Hell, *Prov.* ix. 17, 18. Sin is a sweet poison; pleasant in the acting, but bitter in the end: for *the soul that sinneth shall die*, *Ezek.* xiii. 20. and will you spare it, and keep it still within your mouth? hide it under your tongue, until it become the gall of Asps within you, *Job* xx. 12, 13. Consider also, that your secret wickedness, committed in the dark, in corners, that is masked and close kept, is known to God.

The infinitely holy, and heart-searching God, marks them, *Job* x. 14. *Hof.* vii. 2. Watcheth them, *Job* xiv. 16, Sealeth them, they are down among his treasures, *Deut.* xxxii. 34. and they will find you out, *Numb.* xxxii. 23. (if not truly and deeply repented of, and pardoned) they will lie down with you in the grave, and follow you into the other world, and meet you at God's dreadful Bar, and be discovered in the sight of the whole World; evil shall pursue the sinner: This evil thing, and bitter (bred in the womb, not buried in the grave, not extinguished by the fire of Hell) shall pursue the sinner unto Hell. Sinners, this is most certain, unrepented sins will never leave you, but lie down and rise with

with you, your bones are full of the sins of your youth, which shall lie down with you in the dust, *Job xx. 11.* Sin is a bad bed-fellow, and a worse grave-fellow; and if it sleep with you, it will awake with you when the dreadful Trumpet shall sound; *Arise ye dead, and come to judgment*: The damned in Hell have all their sins about them; that which was the cause of their being cast into Hell, will be their everlasting companion there, and will you take these Vipers and Scorpions into your bosoms, that will be always gnawing upon your hearts? Know this, your posting Sun of all sinful sensual delights, will set in the dreadful Ocean of endless, easeless, and remediless sorrow.

4. Consider, *That only which is eternal, will stand you in stead when you come to die.* (*viz.*) when you shall shoot the vast gulf, and lanch out into that infinite Ocean of Eternity, that hath neither bounds, nor banks, nor bottom.

Immortal souls! Do you see any thing that hath eternity graven upon it? There are varieties of objects, both of persons and things, that present themselves to your view. Lift up your eyes to the vast

Heavens that are bespangled and beautified with a glorious Sun, Moon, and glittering Stars, that have been there for some thousands of years. See whether eternity be there? No, they had their beginning, and must have their period, *Gen. i. Heb. i 10, 11. Thou Lord in the beginning hast laid the foundations of the Earth, and the Heavens are the works of thine hands: They shall perish, they wax old as doth a garment, but thou remainest: The day is coming wherein the Sun shall be turned into darkness, and the Moon into Blood; the Stars of Heaven shall fall, and the Powers of the Heavens shall be shaken, the Elements shall melt with fervent heat, and the Earth with the works that are therein, shall be burnt up. Matt. xxiv. 29. 2 Pet. iii. 10.*

Moreover, look to your near and dear Relations, for whom you expose yourselves to so much pain, care, and trouble, look to *Abraham* your Father, and to *Sarah* that bare you (as the Prophet speaketh in another case) to your Husbands, Wives, Children, Parents, Friends, Neighbours, Magistrates, Ministers, are these for ever? No, many of them are gone down to the dark Valley already, and shall return no more; or look to
those

those brave Heroes, *Alexander, Cæsar, Pompey*, and where they are ! are they not all conquered by the King of Terrors, and held in the prison of the Grave, for many hundred years ? Look to your Gold, Silver, Pearls, Perfumes, costly Cabinets, stately structures, Princely Palaces, are these for ever ? No, they are corruptible things, and cannot deliver in the day of the Lord's wrath. King's Palaces are desolate places, ready to become a heap ; Crowns are translated from head to head ; Scepters pass from one hand to another ; and Kingdoms have their rise, and they have their ruin : And will you sell your precious souls for pelf, and transitory trash, which indeed is more in expectation than in fruition ? consider how little that is worth, for which you run the dreadful hazard of losing Heaven.

But now (if you are Believers) lift up your eyes to the everlasting hills, and put the Eagle's eye of Faith within the Vail, there's the Ancient of Days ; God your Father the chiefest Good, and highest Happiness ; there is Christ your dear Redeemer, the Prince of Glory, and a House not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens, and upon the favour of

E 4 God,

God, the love and righteousness of Christ, you may see Eternity.

Again, turn your eyes inward to the hidden man of the heart, is there the seed of God or impress of his Image, and the Divine nature? 1 *John* iii. 9. 2 *Pet.* i. 4. Is there an active, living, springing principle of Grace? *John* iv. 14. On this thou mayest read Eternity; Grace is the Heir of Glory, every drop of which runs into the Ocean, and nothing else can befriend you; *For the things that are seen are temporal, but the things that are not seen are eternal,* 2. *Cor.* iv. 18.

5. Consider, *which of the two Eternities you are going towards?* I would have you deeply and seriously consider, that there is one place for the Sheep, and another for the Goats; one place for the Righteous, and another for the Ungodly; one place for believers, and another for unbelievers: one place for the dead, and another for the living: an eternal night, or eternal day; eternal pains, or eternal pleasures; eternal Bliss, or eternal Burnings; and eternal Life, or eternal Death; an eternal Heaven, or an eternal Hell.

Now sinners, stop here and consider, unto which of the two do you belong? Have you any certainty of a blessed and glorious

glorious Eternity? that Heaven, not Hell, will be your place and portion; for resolving of which, consider, and answer to these Queries.

Have you unfeignedly Believed, repented, and turned to God with the renting of your hearts, and resigned your whole souls to him? Do you find your hearts affectionately and vehemently carried out to Jesus Christ, so as not to be satisfied without Union and communion with him? Is Jesus Christ the Beloved and Darling of your Souls?

Have you (being sensible of what you have done against him, and of your unworthiness of him) by a deep, and heart-humiliation, laid a foundation for Heaven and happiness? You must sow before you can reap, and they that sow in tears, shall reap in joy, *Psal.* cxxvi. 5.

Are you Heaven-born, or born after the flesh only? If by a sound work of Conversion, you are become new creatures indeed, *2 Cor.* v. 17. It is well: stand and wonder at amazing mercy; if not, fear and tremble; for if you fail here, you are utterly undone for ever.

Further are you risen with Christ, or dead in trespasses and sins? *Eph.* ii. 1. Are you partakers of the first Resurrec-

tion, or are you in your graves, rotting, stinking, in your sins, being past feeling? Are you truly at odds with sin, and every sin? or do you take pleasure in unrighteousness? Are you for godliness in the life and power of it? and is there no reigning allowed sin in your hearts and ways? Doth sin, and every sin look ugly, feel heavy, taste bitter, and no Idol of the heart to keep Christ out of his throne? No secret sin lived in against Conscience? Do you pray, and desire to live in the fear, and as under the eye of God, making conscience of secret sins, and of secret duties with a sincere respect to God's glory, and your own good? Doth the heart searching God find you in your Closets, on your knees morning and evening, pouring out your souls before him? every one that is godly, will pray, *Psal. xxxii. 6.*

Are you crucified to the World, or do your souls cleave unto the dust? have you a treasure in Heaven, or treasures in the field only? have you bought the Pearl? or are you content with Pebbles? who are your Associates, the Devil's herd, or Christ's flock? are you companions for swine and filthy dogs, the world of ungodly, or of the Doves and Lambs of Christ?

Christ? Whose mark have you, the mark of sheep? (*viz.* Holiness, Humility, Innocency) or the mark of Goats? (*viz.* Lust, Pride, and Uncleaness?) Who keeps the Throne, the King of Saints, or the God of this World? Do your hearts and lives speak *Heaven, heaven, heaven, or Hell, hell, hell?* Hell is not more the place of the Devil, than the heart of a wicked man. Can you look upward, and say, *Our Father which art in Heaven*, or must you look downward and say, *Our Father which art in Hell?* How can you take comfort in any thing of this world, that are like to be unspeakably and eternally miserable in the other world? Suppose you had as much of the riches, pomp, and glory of the world, as any man that ever lived upon the face of the earth? If you could say, this Crown, this Kingdom, this Country is mine, this Gold, this Silver, or this shop, these goods, this Manor, this Farm, these Fields, these Flocks, this Corn, these Cattle, these Mines, these Pearls, these Jewels are mine, what would all avail you, if your souls are the Devil's? Now, how stands the case of your precious souls? are they secured? have you made a real preparation for

death and judgement, or left all undone? Are you vessels of honour prepared unto glory, or vessels of wrath fitted to destruction? *Rom.* xxii. 23. Let Conscience speak, commune with your hearts, *Psal.* iv. 4. Consider your ways, *Hag.* i. 5. Search and try yourselves, *Lam.* iii. prove your own work, examine yourselves, whether you are in the Faith, *2 Cor.* xiii. 5. Whatsoever you sow, you shall certainly reap, *Gal.* vi. 7, 8. and in the place where the Tree falleth, there it shall lie, *Eccles.* xi. 13. If it falleth to the North, it lieth to the North; if it falleth towards the South, it lieth towards the South. If you live and die towards Heaven, Heaven will be your plate and home: but if you live and die towards Hell, Hell will be your place and home. For according to your doing in this World, will be your doom in the World that is to come, *2 Cor.* v. 10. And is it not sad and dreadful, to believe that you have precious never dying souls, and do not know whether they shall be saved or damned, stand or fall, live or die, to all eternity? And yet this is the case with thousands, and millions of Men and Women now in the World, that are making post-haste to Hell, and think
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and hope they are in the way to Heaven,
Prov. xvi. 25.

6. Consider, *How near are you to your everlasting habitation?* You are all going down amain the stream of time, into the great Ocean, and you will shortly come thither. There is not a step you step, not a breath you draw, not a word you speak, not a moment of time you live, but hath an influence upon Eternity. These golden sands running between two eternities, will quickly be gone, a short race will be soon run. O what a nothing is our life! *viz.* a span, a dream, a wind, a shadow, a vapour, a post, swifter than a post, *Job vii. 6.* You are all going to your long and last home, to the House of Eternity: every man goeth to his long home, *Eccles. xii. 5.* How doth he go? he goeth swiftly, always in motion, night and day, sleeping and waking, labouring or loitring, this post hastens, time and tide stays not. Again, he goeth insensibly, man doth not discern or perceive how this precious time doth fly from him; the shadow on the Dial passeth from one hour or figure to another, from the Sun rising to its setting, tho' its speedy transient motion is not observed,
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so man passeth from infancy to childhood, from childhood to youth, from youth to middle age, and so to old age, and the grave; and we take little or no notice of it. Again, he goeth irresistibly, neither Men nor Angels, Physic, nor Physician, can keep him here; it is as easy to obstruct the whole course of nature, or to hinder God's Covenant of day and night. A man may as well restrain the Sun from rising, the Sea from flowing, or the Wind from blowing, as keep man from dying, and going to the place appointed for all living. We are but as yesterday, *Job* viii. 9. it was but as it were yesterday, and we were in the womb of nothing, had no being, and it will be but as it were tomorrow, and we shall disappear, and be (as to this world) as if we had never been. We are crushed before the moth, *Job* iv. 19. and in a moment we go down to the Grave, and shall come up no more. Yea, our Pictures and Statues remain fresh and firm, when we are gone down to the bars of the pit, and rest together in the dust, and our very Dogs, Horses, live when we are dead and become meat for worms.

This heart-affecting meditation, had a very great influence on a great *Persian* King,

King, who taking a view of his huge vast Army, wept, to think that within a hundred years, not one man of them would be left alive. Sinners, you are to look beyond the Grave, because after death, the judgment, *Heb. ix. 27.* O then tremble to consider, that you are all this day standing before the door of Eternity, either on the brink of life, or on the brink of death, upon the borders of Heaven, or the mouth of Hell, and shall ere long be made to see what is on the other side of the Wall; as soon as death hath shut your eyes, you shall see and know what you shall be for ever. If you are now unconverted, and without God in the World, you are almost come within the sight of the burning Lake of Fire and Brimstone; but if Saints, you are almost within the view of the *New Jerusalem*; if ungodly sinners, you are almost within the dreadful noise of the Millstones of wrath, and the rattlings of the fiery chains of the Prisoners of Hell, the dolorous out-cries and hideous roarings of the spirits in prison, crying out one and all, *O what evil, and an infinite evil and bitter, bitter thing is sin, which we would not consider or believe till we came to this dismal place of torments!* There you may hear
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the cursed, tormented unbeliever crying out upon his God-provoking, Christ-rejecting, and Soul-murdering sin of infidelity, saying in the anguish of his soul, *If I had accepted of the remedy, I had not been in this doleful misery, the Lord of Glory was at the door, I heard him knock a long time, but would not let him in, therefore is Hell's mouth shut upon me for ever.* There the Swearers, Liars, Blasphemers, that did tear and rend the Sacred Name of their Creator, and swear by the Blood and Wounds of their offered Redeemer, are heard with their hot and scorched tongues to bewail, that ever they should take the Name of the infinitely holy God in vain.

There the hypocritical and self-hearted professors, the sinners in *Sion* cry out, and wish that either they had made no shew of love to Christ and Holiness at all, or that they had loved him in sincerity, and above all, that so they might have escaped everlasting burnings.

There the impudent, ranting, swinish drunkard, that pleased his eye and palate with his pleasant cups, sparkling wine, and cursed companions, is heard to wish in the agony of his soul, *O that I had been sober, temperate, abstemious, that so*
I might

I might not have tasted of the wine of the wrath of God, which is red, and full of mixture, the dregs whereof I must be made to drink for ever, Psal. lxxv. 8. Isai. v. 22.

There the filthy, unclean Adulterers, and Adulteresses, that burned in their hellish lusts, which they were resolved to satisfy, are heard to wish, *O that we had been sober, modest, chaste, and that our wanton, lustful eyes had been stark blind, and never known or seen the face of man or woman; that we might not have suffered the vengeance of eternal fire, Jude 7.*

There the notoriously vile, abominable Atheists, that mocked and scoffed at the belief of a Deity and Judgment to come, and that said in the pride and stoutness of their hearts, let him make speed, and hasten his work, that we may see it; for we have made a covenant with death, and with Hell are we at agreement, may be heard to roar and cry, *O that we had heard, believed, and feared what was foretold by Ministers concerning this dark and dreadful place, before it was too late!*

There the wordling and wretched Earth-worm, that made Earth his Heaven, Gold his God, and chiefest good, is heard to say in the bitterness of his heart,

O that

O that I had never seen any Gold or Silver all my days, so that I might have had a better portion, or that I had with Lazarus begged my bread, so that I might not have come into this place of torment.

There the numerous, fearful, cowardly Apostate and Backslider in heart, who for fear of a little outward hardship, declined his professed principles, and turned his back on Christ, and his persecuted little flock, may be heard to wish, that either he had never known the way of Righteousness, or that he had been faithful unto the death.

Secure and sadly deluded souls, consider you are not far from this direful Gulf, where multitudes of souls lament and weep day and night; and certainly, if the horrible and amazing cries and yellings of those infernal spirits, were sounding in your ears, you would not rest quiet in your beds and houses.

There were sad and astonishing outcries when the world was drowned, when *Sodom* was burned, to see the clouds suddenly drop fire on their heads and houses, and men, women, and children, burning together: but this was but a flea-bite, to that place where is weeping and gnashing of teeth to all
Eter-

Eternity. Remember all you that forget God, the day of your calamity is at hand, and the things that shall come upon you make haste, *Deut.* xxxii. 35.

But if you are the servants of the Lord and real Saints, mourners in *Sion*, lift up your heads and hearts, for you belong to another place, a better Country, *viz.* *To mount Sion, and to the City of the Living God, the Heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of Angels; to the general Assembly, and church of the first-born, which are written in Heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect. And to Jesus the Mediator of the New Covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel, Heb. xii. 22, 23, 24.* And know, that you are almost come within the hearing of these heavenly songs, eternal triumph, and Hallelujahs of Saints and glorious Angels in your Father's house, *Where you will have fulness of joy and pleasure for evermore, Psal. xvi. 11.*

7. Consider, *How sudden, violent, or unexpected your end may be.* Therefore let none think or say they shall die in their nest, or promise yourselves a time of preparation by a long life, or a lingering sickness,

sickness, consumption, or such like: Fearless, careless sinners! you don't know what a night, or what an hour may bring forth; the rich man in the Gospel, while he dreamed of many days, was arrested by a killing and dreadful message; *Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee*, Luke xii. 20. He lives not that knoweth, where, when, or how he shall die; some have gone to bed well, and died the same night: others have dropped dead from their horses; some have died at their tables, whilst the meat hath been in their mouths; others have died in their full strengths, being wholly at ease and quiet, with breasts full of milk, and bones moistened with marrow; others die in the bitterness of their souls, and never eat with pleasure. They shall lie down alike in the dust, and the worms shall cover them, when they are brought to the Grave, and remain in the Tomb. Sirs, there are many dreadful instances in the Word of God, of the sad and sudden approach of this merciless messenger, death, which stands as so many sea marks to give you warning, lest death should come in an hour you look not for it; and find you unprepared. The
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king of the *Caldeans* in his greatest jollity, and having not a thought of death, saw an hand writing on the wall which was very terrible, and the same night was slain, *While he was feasting, and drinking wine, and praising the gods of Gold and Silver: in the same hour came forth fingers of a man's hand, and wrote over against the Candlestick upon the Plaister of the wall of the King's Palace; and the King saw the part of the hand that wrote: Then the King's countenance was changed and his thoughts troubled, so that the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote one against another, Dan. v. 3, 4, 5, 6, and 30, death is the King of Terrors, and Terror of Kings. Good Hezekiah received a sudden summons for death, Isa. xxxviii. 1. which made him turn his face to the wall, pray and weep sore, and to chatter like a Crane, and mourn like a Dove, in the bitterness of his soul, because he was to go to the gates of the grave, and to the pit, where there is no hope. The first-born in *Egypt* were slain at midnight, which made a great cry, *Exod. xii. 29, 30. Korah* and his wicked company were swallowed up in the midst of their Rebellion, *Num. xvi. 30, 31.**

30, 31. *They went down quick into the pit, and all Israel fled at the cry of them.*

There died suddenly of the men of *Bethshemesh* fifty thousand and threescore and ten, because they looked into the Ark, 1 *Sam.* vi. 19. And God many times taketh away the desire of our eyes with a stroke, as he did *Ezekiel's* wife, *Ezek.* xxiv. 16. *Job's* Children died at their banquet; *Ishbosheth* was smitten and died in his sleep, *Ananias* and *Sapphira* being Husband and Wife, died within three or four hours one of the other with a lie in their mouths, *Acts* v. 5, 10. The righteous judge many times shoots an Arrow suddenly at wicked men, who die in the act of sin, *Psal.* lxxiv. 7. When they are about to fill their bellies, the Lord doth cast the fury of his wrath upon them, as he did upon the chosen men of *Israel*, *Psal.* lxxviii. 30, 31. Many times God, to execute his fierce wrath, sends out his destroying Angel, who will make dreadful work in a little time; for in one night in the Camp of the *Assyrians*, the Angel of the Lord smote an hundred and fourscore and five thousand, that in the morning were all dead Corps, *Isa.* xxxvii. 36. How short and uncertain is our life, subject every moment

ment to the stroke of death, and which the least crumb or fly may put an end unto, as it hath to many. And as our end may be sudden, so also it may be violent; a mortal disease may invade both heart and head, and poor dying creatures many times are so distressed, and distracted, that they cannot think of any thing but their tormenting pain, being incapable to say any thing to God or men about their souls! O how stupid and insensible do many souls make their passage into the other world! Like *Nabal*, or like a man in a Lethargy; or as so many stocks or stones, and not awake till they awake in the flames of Hell. The rich man died, and in Hell he lift up his eyes; his first and second death was very unexpected. All you obdurate sinners, stand here and wonder at the matchless mercy and infinite patience of the great God in delaying the King of Terrors so long; God hath not dealt so kindly with thousands of sinners that are gone before unto judgment, and who went down to the pit in a moment. (witness the late dreadful plague) by the means of which a hundred thousand souls were sent into Eternity. O let not *London* nor *England* forget

get that, and other tremendous judgments which our sins have called for, lest a worse than any yet should come upon us. The forgetting of our latter end is a deadly and provoking sin, and that which will hasten judgment. *Her filthiness is in her skirts, she remembered not her last end; therefore she came down wonderfully, she had no comforter, Lam. i. 9.*

8. Consider, *That when death cometh to strike the stroke, your souls are startled, your Eternity is cast without change for ever:* Then your immortal souls are for salvation, or damnation; for eternal life, or eternal death; for an eternal Heaven, or eternal Hell. You sadly besotted souls! know and remember, while you have a day, before the golden thread of life be cut, that if you be found without Christ, Faith, Repentance, Holiness, but a moment after death, you are undone to Eternity. After death, all means and hopes fail, there is no work or device in the grave, *Eccles. ix.* God will be then irreconcilable, sin unpardonable, Heaven not attainable, and your souls lost irrecoverably. And then the Devil, your bloody adversary, will have his design upon you; he knoweth that

that if you be his in life and death, that you are his for ever, and that he and you shall never part. Sinners, this is certain, as the tree falleth, so it lyeth; as is the seed, so will be the harvest; if you do the Devil's work, you must have the Devil's wages; if you march under the command and conduct of the Prince of Darkness, and suffer him to lead and hurry you hither and thither at his will whilst you live, you will be his Prisoners and slaves in that dreadful dungeon of dismal darkness after you are dead.

Consider, the Land of darkness is no place for service, there is no repenting in the Grave, no Lord have mercy on us written upon Hell gates, no Sabbaths, no Sermon, no Ministers there. 'Tis in the time of life that you are to labour, and make preparation for Life Eternal; because according to your work and choice in this World, will be your everlasting Lot in the World that is to come. It is appointed for you once to die, and after death, *Heb. ix. 27.* The pale Horse death goeth before, and hell followeth after, *Rev. vi. 8.* There will be no change of your condition, the eternal ruin, or eternal welfare of your precious
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souls depends on these few minutes, this swift stream of man's life, after it once turneth or declineth, ever runneth with a perpetual ebb, never floweth again; so that all that you leave undone now, will be undone for ever. If you die unbelievers, you will be unbelievers for ever; if you die under the guilt and power of sin and wrath of God, you will remain under the guilt of sin, and wrath of God for ever: but if you die holy, humble, mortified, sincere souls, you will remain holy, heavenly, and in the favour of God for ever, *Rev. xxi. He that is filthy, will be filthy still; and he that is holy, will be holy still*: But the impenitent, unpardoned sinner, though he live a hundred or a thousand years in satisfying his lusts, will be accurst at last. Poor sinners! that read this little Treatise, let me beg you to up and be doing while it is day; the night will come, wherein you nor no man can work, *Job. ix. 4*. Then to your work with might and main, while your candle is burning, your Sun shining. Will you yet loiter, and see your glass running, your Sun setting, yourselves dying, and your souls perishing? *O seek the Lord while he may be found, Isa. lv. 6.*
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in an acceptable time, 2 *Cor.* vi. 2. before the day pass as the chaff, before the decree bring forth, before the evil day cometh, before they that look out of Windows be dark, and the keepers of the house begin to tremble, before the doors be shut in the streets, and the silver cord be loosed, or the Pitcher be broken at the Fountain, before you are gone to your long home, and the spirit returned to God that gave it.

Consider with yourselves, are you fit to grapple with this mighty Monarch Death, are you freighted for this long Voyage, and ready and willing to pass through this dark Entry; take heed, and fear, lest you be found unfit; think upon the sadly deluded Virgins, that had their Oil to buy when their lamps should burn and so came to the door, but found it shut: think on poor *Esau* that was hunting for Venison, while he lost the Blessing.

Poor perishing souls! what do you intend to do? if you will work, it must be now or never; are you resolved to seek and secure the Kingdom of God first, *Mat.* vi. 33. whilst it is called to-day? or will you bestow nothing but the dregs and snuffs of rotten old age upon God and your immortal Souls? O

that you might know in this your day the things which belong to your peace, before they be hid from your eyes !

9. Lastly, Consider, *That it is the most dreadful and amazing sight on this side Hell, to see a Christless unbeliever breathing out his last.* There are other sad sights, viz. to see a man starving for want of bread, or dying for want of a Physician, or drowning for want of a Boat ; or to see a man dead, a corps, a body without a soul : but ah ! how sad and astonishing a spectacle is it, to see a man near the coast of Eternity, viz. to behold a wretched sinner in his cold sweats and dying groans, with his precious immortal Soul standing on his pale, cold, quivering lips, and death the great Conqueror, and King of Terrors marching furiously with his Writ of remove in one hand (not to be revert) and his deadly dart and sting in the other hand ; Conscience on the wrack, barking, biting and tearing him like a Lion ; the Devil, God's Executioner, looking on, and standing by ; the heart under dejecting and sinking despair ; the eyes dim and fixed ; his heart-strings ready to break with anguish ; his Wife, Children, Friends, at the bed side weeping, sighing, crying, wringing their hands

hands, beating their breasts; the Wife crying out, alas my Husband! the Child crying out, alas my Father! The poor perishing soul all this while looking backward upon its mispent time, and by past sins, inward upon his own heart, a dreadful sight! where he seeth no Christ, no Graces, no purity, nothing but sin, guilt, death, darkness: Then looking up to that God that has been provoked, to that Christ that hath been rejected, to that heaven and Eternity that he hath lost; and looking downward to that dark and dreadful pit, that must be his place and portion (with a fearful looking for of judgment) seeing the Devils come and ready to seize upon him. O what a dreadful out-cry and shriek will the Soul make when it departs, perceiving itself sinking down, down to the burning Lake, and bottomless pit, where he must take up his lodging with devouring fire to all eternity!

The pangs of death, the world's loss, anguish of Conscience, and frights of Hell meeting together, will make a man perfectly miserable, and force him to cry out with cursed Cain, Gen. iv. 13. *My punishment is greater than I can bear;* or to say, with the sadly afflicted Church, *Behold no sorrow like unto my sorrow.*

And if the dreadful reflection of a guilty accusing Conscience be so tormenting here, what will the whole flame and Sea of wrath be, when poured out to the very utmost.

Senseless sinners! consider, this may be your doleful case when you come to die, *viz.* to have such sorrow and wrath with your sickness, *Eccles. v. 17. For there is no Peace to the wicked, saith my God:* not one word in all the Bible, but speaks terror in life and death, though the sinner lives a hundred years, he shall be accurst; he dieth under all the curses written in God's Book; yea, under that most dreadful Gospel-curse, *1 Cor. vi. 22.* The apprehension of which will cause such distraction of spirit, and sad reflections of guilt, which will make them curse their God and their King; looking down to the pit, roaring out, *Who among us shall dwell with devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?* Therefore be wise to consider this, all ye that forget God, *lest he tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver,* *Psal. l. 22.*

And as it is dreadful and amazing to see the unbeliever dying; so on the contrary, 'tis comfortable and reviving to
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see the godly man dying, because his *ultimum* is his *optimum*, his last is his best, *The day of his death is better than the day of his birth*, Eccl. vii. 1. *his end is peace*, Psal. xxxvii. 37.

God at peace, conscience at peace, and all at peace; O blessed sight! to see the heaven-born panting soul going out of the World upon the Wings of joy, calmness, and serenity of spirit, with full sail for Heaven; longing and crying out, make no tarrying, O my God! haste, my beloved, haste; so come Lord Jesus; I desire to depart, and to be with Christ, which is the best of all, *Phil.* i. 23.

You have heard what are the great things to be considered, namely, that an end will certainly be, this world is no place of continuance; they that now see you, ere long will see you no more for ever. You have heard that your present things will perish; that sin, so full of deadly poison, will leave a sting, a dart that will strike through your Liver; and that the case of the wicked will be doleful, dreadful, yea, desperate, when they come to die; for when death comes, your soul then will be stated so as there can be no alteration to eternity.

The next thing^s is, to speak to the reasons why it is a duty and matter of such moment to consider, are these following :

Reas. 1. Is taken from God, *because the only wise, gracious, most indulgent, and soul-compassionating God wisbeth it, and that most vehemently. O that they were wise! that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end!* Sirs, in this pathetic Option, or desire, there is the very tender bowels of God : this is the very language of his heart, and it is, as if he had (after the manner of men) spoken thus to his faithful servant *Moses*. I have but one wish or request, and all is comprehended in this one, *viz.* that thou shouldst go and tell them from me, that they must be wise to consider this, to remember the days of old, and the years of many Generations what I have done for them in chusing them above all the Nations of the World to be my Treasure, Portion and peculiar People : and because I love them I have delivered them, wrought wonders for them in *Egypt*, the Red Sea, and in the Wilderness ; and have kept them as tenderly as the apple of mine eye, carrying them upon Eagle's wings, but yet let them know, that they
have

have forgotten me, provoked me, and that their end is like to be miserable; for a fire is kindled in mine anger, and unless they do speedily consider it, will burn to the lowest Hell.

Now your souls in peril, which is best? to thwart, cross, and grieve your well-wishing, dearest, best, and only Friend; or to please and gratify your professed, deadly, implacable enemy? Your Adversary the Devil cannot endure that you should think of Death, or dying; for if Satan, that old Serpent, would permit and suffer you to look into Hell, he could neither drag nor draw you thither at his pleasure. And will you go on in the ways of sin and death? or bethink yourselves whose you are, what you have done, whither you are going, and what is like to become of you when your breath is gone, what provision you have made for the other World, that so the great business between God and your souls may be made up.

Sinners! if the infinitely holy, just, and righteous God did desire, or design your ruin and destruction, he would not have excited you to this solemn and serious consideration of the end of Sin, Death, and Eternity, until it were too

late, and you left without Remedy; so that what is here intended, hath a tendency to make you happy if it be regarded. *O that they were wise, &c.*

Reas. 2. *Because a deep, serious, and heart-affecting consideration of death and the grave will both realize it, and represent it as near, even at the door, and make it to stand in open view; whereas things looked upon at a distance, whether they be good, or whether they be evil, but have a little, if any influence: now a fixed and hearty consideration will give it as it were a being for future things, and bring them near, so that you may really converse with those things.*

A truly godly man that hath a view of unseen things by Divine Contemplation here, upon the wings of Faith and Hope, he may ascend up to Heaven, and walk a turn in the golden streets of the New *Jerusalem*, as the Prophet *Ezekiel* was in the Vision of God at *Jerusalem* in his mind, when his body was by the River *Chebar* among the Captives in the Land of the *Chaldeans*; so likewise those sadly wounded spirits, who through fear of death, are all their life-time subject to bondage, being exercised with soul-conflicts,

flits, and under powerful cutting and killing convictions of sin and misery, have such dark and dismal thoughts and apprehensions of hell and the wrath of God, which makes them ever and anon to enter into the Chambers of death, and visit the Prisoners of the Pit, and look upon that black Gulf and fiery Furnace to be so near, that they are on the brink of it falling down continually. This hath been the case of many of God's precious ones, who are now in Heaven above all these fears and frights that were once more bitter than death: And, oh! how many travelling with these pangs and agonies of Soul, are ready to cry out with holy *Job*, Chap. vi. 4. *The Arrows of the Almighty are within me, the poison whereof drinketh up my Spirit, the terrors of God do set themselves in array against me.* Such is the nature of meditation, or consideration, that it will cause future and remote things to have a real, powerful, and deep impression on our minds. As for instance:

A Merchant in *India*, by his meditation or contemplation, may converse with his Affairs, his Wife, Children, and Friends in *England*; or a Merchant that's walking on the Exchange in *London*,

may have his mind and thoughts in *Spain* or *Italy*, or elsewhere. A Malefactor, cast into Prison for some notorious crime, may long before the Assizes converse with all the sad circumstances of his Trial, he may (in his thoughts) see himself brought to the Bar, standing before a terrible Judge to hear his indictment read, the Charg'd prov'd, his doom and sentence pronounc'd, and see (as it were) himself at the place of his Execution, with the Rope about his Neck, which must immediately hang him. And if you would in good earnest set yourselves to consider your latter end, you may really and heart-affectingly converse with Old-age, Weakness, Sickness, your death-bed, short-breathing, cold sweats, dying pangs and groans, winding-sheet, coffin, and see yourselves (as it were) stretched out, nail'd up, and on the shoulders of men carrying to the Grave, where Worms and filthy Vermin must feed upon you.

The Servants of God and Saints of old have done this with great success, and soul-advantage, and so should you. They have reckoned or counted their Lives by Days, because they were every day liable to Death, and expected it daily. *Teach us to number our days*, says *Moses*, *Psal.*

xc. 12. *Few and evil have the days of my life been,* said old Jacob. *For man that is born of a woman, is of few days,* Job i. 1, 5. *All the time of which (said Job) will I wait till my change come,* Job xiv. 14. *For I know that thou wilt bring me to death, and to the house (a dark house) appointed for all living:* And Chap. xvii. 1. he said, *my breath is corrupt, my days are extinct, the Grave is ready for me;* wherever he went or came, he was looking for a Grave. Again; by consideration we may not only look to the Grave, but beyond it, to the great transactions, and astonishing things that shall be after death. We may converse with the World's burning, Christ's coming, the Trumpets sounding, the graves opening, the Dead's rising, the Wicked's roaring, who (as jolly as they are) shall then cry to dead and deaf Mountains and rocks to fall on them, to hide them from the dreadful face of the now slighted Son of God; for in that great day of his fierce and terrible wrath, they will not be able to stand, *Rev. vi. 16, 17.*

By this realizing believing consideration, we may see the Judge standing behind the door; and the son of God (as it were) ready to break forth of the
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Clouds with power and great glory, as *Hierom* did, who said, whether I eat or drink, I hear this voice in my ears, *Arise ye dead, and come to judgment.* Now if a right consideration of the great things to come be so penetrating, and heart-awakening, let death, which always doggeth you at your heels, be often upon your thoughts; your heads and hearts too should be much upon it: every night you lie down, and every morning you arise, let there be some serious and awful thoughts of Death and Eternity. That which many have engraven on their Rings, *viz. Remember to die*; let it be by the pen of a Diamond written on your hearts. It's storied of *Philip of Macedon*, that he laid a charge upon one of his Servants to come every morning into his Chamber, and proclaim this, that he was mortal: and if a heathen were so careful of keeping the memory of his mortality, much more should a Christian. We should always remember the days of darkness, and keep life and death, heaven and hell before us, there being but a step between us and death. The neglect and want of this, was *Israel's* sin, and *Jerusalem's* too, *She did not remember her last end,*

end, therefore she came down wonderfully, Lam. i. 9. and this God, who would have us remember and consider, doth sadly complain of by the Prophet, Isa. i. 3. calling Heaven and Earth to witness for him. Hear, O Heavens! and give ear, O Earth! the Ox knoweth his owner, and the Ass his Master's Crib, but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider.

Reas. 3. A serious consideration of your latter end (through grace) will prove an absolute and sovereign Antedote to expell the greatest evil (yea, a means to escape an infinite loss) viz. sin and the dreadful effects and consequences of it.

What is the cause of that innundation and sea of Wickedness, and most prodigious sins that are now in the World, and in this Nation, in every City, Town, and Place, and in most Families, among all ranks and degrees of men, viz. Magistrates, Ministers, People, Parents, Children, Masters, Servants, but this, their not duly and deeply considering their latter end? This we find laid down in the Word of God to be one
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main ground of all sin, and of the neglect of duties.

You careless souls! did you believe and remember that you must die, and come to judgment, that your naked souls, and naked sins, must shortly stand before the most tremendous, direful Judge of quick and dead, the reflection hereof would be as a knife at your throats, as a sword at your breasts, or as a hand-writing on the wall, to retard and hinder your constant and desperate course of wickedness.

O what horrid, hellish outrages are now committed, and that deliberately, impudently, obstinately, even against the light of Nature, Conscience, Scripture! What Cursing, Lying, Swearing, Blaspheming, Sabbath-breaking, Cheating, Couzening, Stealing! What wantonness, Filthiness, uncleanness, Swinish Drunkenness, Covetousness, Earthly mindedness! What Mocking, Scoffing, Wrath, Envy, Malice, Pride, Passion, and Spiritual Wickedness too, as Unbelief, Atheism, Impenitency, Hypocrisy, Apostachy, Hatred of God, his People, Ministers, ways and Ordinances, every where aboundeth! Men declare their sin like *Sodom*; and are not ashamed of
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the unfruitful works of darkness, and why? but because they do not set their minds and hearts upon their latter end.

Poor dying sinners! let me (out of tender compassion to your bleeding, and almost sinking Souls) intreat you as for the Lord's sake, to go down to the grave, to go down to Hell in your thoughts, and stop here, and think of the King of Terrors, the worm of conscience, the approach of Devils, the burning Lake, the bottomless Pit, the loss of God, of Christ, of Heaven, and your precious souls; remember those fiery, scorching, endless flames, the presence and company of Devils, Reprobates and damned Spirits; and your sweet morsels will be gall and wormwood to you. These amazing things being truly reflected on, will be as Lightning in your eyes, Thunder in your ears, as Thorns, Darts, and Swords in your flesh, as Poison in your bowels, as Fire in your bones, to compel and force you speedily to curb and check the reins of your hellish lusts, that so you might fly from the wrath to come.

Did you but view the dark and cold grave, and hot hell that is so near, you would rather starve or die, than run to that

that excess of riot; you could not sleep, and snort, dance and sport upon the pit's brink under such a consideration.

But forget all this, banish the thoughts of God, Death, and Hell, and you will run and rush into sin, as the horse into the Battle, *Luke* 12. 45. crying peace, peace, till danger, death, and destruction come, *1 Thes.* 5. 3.

This was that mighty sin that ripened *Jerusalem* for ruin, and brought her down wonderfully. *Her filthiness is in her skirts, she remembereth not her last end.* The Lord complaineth by the Prophet *Isaiab* of the same thing, *Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider:* But what follows, *a sinful Nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evil doers; they have forsaken the Lord, they have provoked the holy one of Israel.* Compare *Lam.* i. 6. *Isa.* i. 3, 4.

But he that doth that which is lawful and right, shall save his soul alive; who is that? He that considereth, and turneth away from all his transgressions that he hath committed, he shall save his soul, whatsoever doth perish, that man shall never perish, *Ezek.* xviii. 14. 28.

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Reas. 4. *The consideration of your latter end, will be a powerful incentive to make you exert, and put forth the greatest industry in a way of duty: Yea, it will certainly have an influence upon all our duties, and upon all our graces; for considering and doing are frequently joined together, Psal. xli. 1. Prov. xxxi. 16. She considereth a field, and buyeth it: I thought on my ways, or considered my ways, and turned my feet unto thy Testimonies, Psal. cxix. 59. Lam. 3. 40. Heb. x. This, if any thing, will make you serious, diligent, and constant in any duty, and to work while it is day, before the night cometh, wherein no man can work.*

The Apostle exhorts, *to consider one another, to provoke to love and good works; and so much the more as ye see the day approaching, Heb. x. 24, 25. The remembrance of the day of our Death, and of our passing into Eternity, with a deep impression of it upon the heart, will be as a voice of thunder, speaking to the secure senseless sinner. Awake, awake, thou that sleepest, open thine eyes, stand upon thy feet, and behold*
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and see what a sea of blood and wrath is here. See and believe, believe and consider, consider and fear, fear and fly, and make haste in thy work: thy work is great and weighty, diversions are many, adversaries are strong, thy strength is small, thy time is short, thy account is great, Death and Judgment are at the door, therefore up and be doing, now or never.

You slow and slothful souls! let your apparent and inevitable danger suddenly provoke and spur you unto your duty, to seek the Lord in a time accepted, before the door of Life be shut, God withdrawn, and Mercy quite gone.

The prophanest sea-man will sigh, mourn, pray, promise, vow, if death and danger looks him in the face; when the ship was like to be broken, and death threatened immediately to surprize them, the Mariners were sore afraid, and cryed every one to his God. And this the very light of Nature dictated to the ship-master (though a Heathen) that then it was no season to sleep: *What meanest thou, O sleeper! arise, and call upon thy God; if so be that God will think upon us that we perish not, Jonah. i. 6.* And the most notorious Thieves and Mur-

Murderers will pray in Prison, or when they come to the Gallows, the Place of Execution.

When the most righteous Judge sent his destroying Angel to the City of *London*, and other places in the year 65; for the dreadful fear of which many thousands did fly, and many thousands did fall, *viz.* the Carcasses of men like dung upon the ground, and as handfuls after the harvestman. When death did knock at a thousand doors in one night, O what confessing of sin, fastings, cryings, and importunate knocking was there at the throne of grace; (and it may be by many persons and families, that prayed but little before or since) that God would pity, pardon, and remove that amazing, sweeping Judgment, which is now almost forgotten. Upon an awakening apprehension of *Niniveh's* fatal ruin, the king and his Nobles decreed and proclaimed a Fast, and enjoined every one to cry mightily to God, *Jonah* iii. 7.

Sinners, were you but truly sensible of your peril, you would pray to purpose, *viz.* more ardently, more inwardly, more deeply, more affectionately than ever you have done. It was

a supposed danger, and that of death, that caused *Jacob* to weep and make supplication; For *Esau* hated *Jacob*, and said in his heart, *The days of mourning for my father are at hand, then will I slay my brother Jacob*, Gen. xxvii. 42. and *Jacob* was greatly afraid and distressed, Gen. xxxi. 7. which made him so importunate with God for deliverance, and he prevailed, Gen. xxxi. 11. *Hos.* xii. 4. Poor sinners! your case is dangerous, (I will not say desperate) but you are ignorant of it; you do not know that you are poor, miserable, blind, and naked; were you but sensible that you are liable to the wrath of God, the stroke and sting of Death every moment, it would constrain you to cry mightily to God for pardon. Holy *Job*, when he considered of Death and Judgment, set Prayer to work, and said, *Why dost thou not pardon my transgression, and take away mine iniquity; for now shall I sleep in the dust? O that thou wouldst hide me in the grave, that thou wouldst keep me secret till thy wrath be past, that thou wouldst appoint me a set time, and remember me*, Job vii. 21. and xiv. 13. This also made those two gracious Kings, *Hezekiah* and *David* to weep and pray in the bitterness of
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of their souls. *In those days was Hezekiah sick unto death, and Isaiah the Prophet came unto him and said, Thus saith the Lord, Set thy house in order, for thou shalt die, and not live, then Hezekiah turned his face to the wall, and wept sore, and prayed to the Lord, Isa. xxxviii. 1, 2, 3.*

David, when the sorrows of death compassed him, and the pains of Hell got hold of him, then (said he) *I called upon thee Lord, O Lord I beseech thee deliver my soul, Psal. 116, 3, 4. Jonah* that could sleep in the ship, prayed in the Whale's belly, *Out of the belly of bell cried I, and thou heardest my voice, Jonah ii. 2. The Apostle Peter, and Christ himself presseth Prayer from the consideration of the end of the World, The end of all things is at hand; be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer, 1 Pet. iv. 7. And, Pray, (saith Christ) that you may escape all these things, and stand before the Son of man, Luke xxi. 36. Neither doth our dear Lord Jesus press that on us, which he did not practise; for being sensible of the bitter and most dreadful cup of his Father's wrath, he prayed, Father, if it be possible, let this Cup pass, Mat. xxvi. 39.*

Sinners!

Sinners! let me tell you, as secure and senseless as you are, an awakening impression of approaching Death and Judgment upon your souls, would be as the cry at midnight to excite and stir you up, to get in your Oyl, and to trim your Lamps. The Virgins, both wise and foolish, were all asleep, and secure enough, until that sudden and amazing cry was heard, *Behold the Bridegroom cometh, go you forth to meet him*, Mat. xxvi. 6. *Then they all arose and trimmed their Lamps.* 'Tis the storm and rain that hastens the Bee into the Hive, that brings the Traveller into his Inn, the Ship into the Harbour: So likewise the sense of Death, the dead and drozy Professor unto his Prayer. *In their afflictions they will seek me early*, Hof. v. 15.

An heart-affecting Meditation of unchangeable eternity, will be as a voice from the Clouds, crying, *Haste sinner, haste, post haste; haste as for thy life in the Work of Faith and Repentance, in parting with sin, and closing with Jesus Christ, without which there will be no hope.* Noah was moved with fear, and prepared, and got into the Ark, to the saving of his house, when the secure deluded World died

died by the deluge, *Heb. xi. 7. Knowing the terror of the Lord, we persuade men,* 2 Cor. v. 11.

You wretched sinners, that will not believe or consider until you are just dropping into the pit: if you had but a little cranny to look into the other World, how violent and resolute would you be in the speedy prosecution of your known duty; you would examine, prove, and try yourselves; you would read, hear, meditate, watch, pray, repent, fear, love, obey more than ever. Did you see the night will come, is coming, and that the days of darkness shall be many, *Whatsoever you do, you will do it with your might, Eccles. ix. 10. Now before the decree bring forth, before the day pass as the Chaff, before the fierce anger of the Lord come upon you, seek ye the Lord; for how shall you escape, if you neglect so great salvation? Zeph. ii. 2, 3. Heb. ii. 3.*

Reas. 5. You are to consider your latter end, because here lieth your highest wisdom; O that they were wise, &c. If you would be so wise as to exceed all the wise men, great statists, and Politicians

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cians in the world, it must be in considering of, and preparing for your end. Sirs, in this you are most concerned, because hereby you will promote your own interest; for it will make a man profitable to himself, wise for himself, *Job* xxii. 2. *Prov.* ix. 12. 'Tis true wisdom to understand this, *viz.* to be wise to that which is good, *Rom.* xvi. 19. to be wise in Christ, to secure the chiefest good is the best wisdom.

There are many worldly wise men, who, while they live, provide for every thing but death, and they are often ready to die, before they begin to live, (in a spiritual sense) and is it not a very unfit and sad season, to prepare for death when it is a burthen to live? And indeed, such are the many evils attending Old Age, that men can have no pleasure in them, *Eccles.* xii. 1. And shall these be accounted the only wise men, that are but wise in their *Generation* to get the World, to pursue lying vanities, and forsake their own mercies, to hew out Cisterns, broken Cisterns that can hold no water, and forsake the Fountain of living water? This is to prefer Pebbles before Pearls, to gain Earth, and to lose Heaven, *Jer.* ii. 13. *Jonah* ii. 8. *Mat.* xvi. 26. To
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be happy for a time, and miserable to Eternity.

True wisdom, and serious consideration, is exercised about things good and evil: yea, 'tis conversant about the best good, how it may attain it; and about the worst evil, how it may impede, avoid, and escape it; chusing the most adequate and effectual means to bring it to pass. This excellent divine wisdom, is proper and profitable to direct, *Prov.* x. 10. and so it doth every considering godly man, while he lives, firstly and firmly to secure that which he hath of greatest value, *viz.* a precious soul more worth than any thing he stands possessed of; If all the Rocks were pearls, all the Earth and Heaven Gold; or if all the water in this vast Ocean was converted into Crystal, or the most precious stones in the World, and put all in one scale, and the Soul into the other scale, the Soul would weigh it all down. Our dear Lord tells us, that the gaining of the whole World is an invaluable consideration to the loss of one Soul, *Mat.* xvi. So that he must be wise indeed, that hath gotten a Cabinet for this rare incomparable Jewel, where it will be for ever safe. *He that winneth Souls is wise, saith the wisest*

of a meer man, *Prov. xi. 30.* and sure then he is so that saves his own. Again, he that considereth his end, is the very way to procure and make the best friend that will certainly stand him in stead to purpose, and in the greatest peril, *viz.* God, Christ, Angels, Saints, Conscience, Scripture, his real friends. When once the breach is made up between God and the poor Soul, who can harm or hurt it? *If God be for us, who can be against us?* *Rom. viii. I will lay me down and sleep in peace,* *Psal. xiv. 8.* Moreover, he provideth against the greatest wants, by laying up for a spending time. There was not a man to be found in all *Egypt* so wise as *Joseph*, who foreseeing their want, filled the storehouses against the years of *Famine*; *he that gathereth his meat in the Summer* (saith *Solomon*) *is wise* *Prov. x. 5.* Consider the time of *Youth* is your *Summer*; old age, a sick-bed, is not a gathering but a spending time, and you are not wise, wise towards God, wise for your precious souls, that do not make it your business to trade and lay up a stock and store against that time. Many a silly soul like the wanton *Grasshopper*, leaps and skips, chirps and sings all the *Summer*, and when the *Winter* cometh,

cometh, perisheth for want: But the truly serious and considering soul, like the laborious Bee or Ant, toils or labours in the Summer: And that man might put off sloth, and learn his duty, and so provide for time to come, *Solomon* sends him to the Ant, *Go to the Ant, thou sluggard, consider her ways, and be wise, which provideth her meat in the Summer, and gathereth her food in Harvest, Prov. vi. 6, 8.* And so the wise in heart, that trade for eternity, lay up the best supplies against the evil day, which are the favour of God, and interest in Christ, pardon of sin, peace of Conscience, a stock of prayers, rich and choice experiences, and love-tokens of their Father's favour, the evidences for their Heavenly Country. This is the hidden and Heavenly Treasure of the Godly man, who only is called the man of Wisdom, *Mich. vi. 9.*

Besides, he preventeth the worst evils, viz. the guilt of Sin, the sting of Death, sorrows of Hell, terrors of Conscience, the wrath of God, the loss of God, his Soul, and Heaven. This infinite, and irreparable evil or loss he shall never sustain, because this timely consideration of Death and Judgment, will be

as means to fit him for it. *They that were ready went into the Marriage, Mat. xxv. 10.*

But for you that are careless of your immortal Souls, that think not of Death, that will not consider your latter end (if infinite mercy do not speedily prevent) you will certainly die without wisdom; if you do not seasonably secure your souls, make God and Christ your friends, (while the poor people of God lay up a treasure in Heaven) a good foundation against the time to come. *You will treasure up wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous Judgment of God, Rom. ii. 5.* And this is the doleful case of many worldly wise men, and of those too whose office and employment is to keep, (if it might be) others alive, viz. to cure diseases, and prevent Death. It is observed concerning *Paracelsus*, a great Physician, a man very skilful in Chymical Experiments, that he bragged and boasted, that he had attained to such wisdom in discerning the constitutions of men, and in studying remedies, that whosoever did follow his Rules, and keep his Directions, should never die by any disease, casually he might, and of old age he must, but he would

would undertake to secure his health against Diseases. A bold and most presumptuous undertaking: but he who by Art promised to protect others, could not by his Art make himself a Protection in the prime of his Age, who died before, or when he had lived but thirty years.

Poor Mortals! sith that you can't prevent death, it is your wisdom to prepare for it; and for as much as you cannot by any means, power, or skill, keep off the stroke of death, get while you may, a remedy or Antidote against the sting of Death, that when you die, you may not die unpreparedly, or die without wisdom. *For man in honour that understandeth not, is like the beast that perisheth,* Psal. xlix. 20. So did that miserable mistaken rich man, who (though by himself or others judged wise) in the account of the only wise God, was a very fool; who providing only for the time of life, and not for death, did deserve the name of *thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required,* Luke xii. 20. A dark and dreadful night indeed, in which he lost both Worlds at once, Earth and Heaven too. And will you say that you are wise, and not consider what your end

shall be? The five Virgins are called foolish Virgins. But why? Because they did not make provision for the Bridegroom's coming, and when they came to the door, it was shut upon them; ah! sad and dreadful disappointment, *Matt. xxv. 10.*

But the diligent and prepared soul, that hath gotten in his oil, and made all ready, is in a capacity to look upon Death with a smiling aspect, because the deadly poison and sting is out, and it can but kill the body, it is not able to hurt the soul: But the sleepy secure sinner will be dreadfully surprized, as *Belshazzar* was - by the hand-writing that appeared on the wall, the terrifying and amazing sight of which changed his countenance, and troubled his thoughts, so that neither his Wine, his Wives, or Concubines, could comfort him, who had lifted up himself against the Lord of Heaven, *Dan. v.*

Sinners! Consider the King of Terrors is a terrible sight, and to none more than to those that have their Heaven here, it will be to those as the tearing their Caul from their very hearts, worse than cutting off a Member from the body; for many have suffered the loss of
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Members to save their lives; *O death, death, death, how bitter, bitter, is the remembrance of thee to the man that is at ease in his possession!* And let me tell you, evils and dangers, by how much the more sudden and unexpected they are, by so much the more dreadful and astonishing they are. What a sad and hideous cry was their in *Egypt*, when at midnight God smote their first-born, and also when the Earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up *Korah* and his cursed company, that went down alive into the Pit, insomuch, that all *Israel* fled at the cry of them, for they said, lest the earth swallow us up also, *Numb.* xvi. 31, 32, 34. And how terrible was that sudden shower of fire and brimstone upon filthy *Sodom*, after a bright Sun-shiny morning; *Gen.* xix. 32, 34. So when grim and gasty Death cometh in a black night, and draweth the curtain, and looketh upon the secure sinner, it will be very formidable; for who can look Death in the face, that dare not look God, or his own Conscience in the face? But the sincerely godly man, fitted for Death, may look and live above the fear of Death and Hell, and welcome Death, as old *Jacob* did the waggons, that his

Son *Joseph* sent to fetch him down to *Egypt*, when he saw the waggons, the spirit of *Jacob*, their Father, revived, *Gen.* xlvi, 27. Death, tho' a grim porter, will open the gates of glory to every Believer, and let them into their Father's house, for both life and death are theirs, *1 Cor.* iii. 22. *Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord*, *Rev.* xiv. 13. *To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain*, *Phil.* i. 11. *Who so is wise, will observe these things*. These are the Reasons why your latter end must be considered.

The Application.

If it be a duty so necessary to mind your end, I shall descend to improve it by way of Application.

Use 1. This calls aloud unto all you unconverted sinners, that have made no preparation for death and Judgment, to stand and wonder, or sit down and admire at the unwearied patience, the matchless and amazing mercy of the infinitely gracious and glorious God.

Hath the most righteous, just, and sin-revenging God, held your souls in Life, and kept you from death and Hell,

Hell, to this very day? And will you not, even to astonishment, adore the unsearchable riches of grace? Men commonly wonder at things above their reach, or that for which they can give no reason, and especially at rare, singular and unmerited mercy. Now, stop a little, and spend a few serious thoughts, and consider what reason can be given, that you should be numbered among the living, when so many are dead, that you should be in the World, and so many thousands of Men, Women, and Children in their graves, and their precious souls you know not where. Now that your bodies are not laid up in that dark and dismal Prison of the Grave, and your dear, never-dying souls, bound, fettered, and chained in that direful, painful Prison of Hell, is matter of the greatest wonder in all the world. Have you not cause to doubt, that many of your Neighbours, Relations, and sinful companions and Acquaintance are gone down together, and it may be some of those you least suspect? And you know not how many are now in flames for the very same sins that you stand guilty of, if not less sinners than yourselves. O! admire and bless God with your whole

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souls,

souls, that you are yet on this side the Grave, and not gone down into that place of torment; you enjoy many opportunities for your souls, and are still exhorted to part with sin, to turn to God, to accept of Christ, to think of Death and Hell, that so you might never see it, or feel it; for there is much more in the pains of Hell, and wrath of God, than ever you heard, or can imagine. *According to thy fear, said Moses, so is thy wrath, Psal. xc. 11.*

Poor sinners! You are still the living Monuments of infinite kindness, and therefore let not the living man complain. Suppose you had died when Death seemed near, when you were sick and weak, ready to give up the Ghost, or when those many thousands died by the Plague or sword, in what a miserable condition had your souls been, to be shut up with Devils and damned Spirits, in the Lake that burneth with fire and Brimstone. And will you still maintain your enmity, increase iniquity, and even dare God to damn you? Sinners, are you not beside yourselves? Yea, stark mad, to make God, that should be your best friend, your worst foe; for if his anger be kindled but a little, it will
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burn to the lowest Hell, and none can quench it, or stand before it. *Can thine heart endure, or thine hands be strong in the days that I shall deal with thee,* Ezek.

xxii. 14. Who can dwell with devouring fire? *Who would (saith the Lord) set the briars and thorns against me in battle? I would go through them, I would burn them up together,* Isa. xxvii. 4. O! when will you come to yourselves, and throw away your arms, and consider your souls? Or will you not be saved, when shall it once be? Why will you die? Let these cords of Love draw you, and cause you to say, *Behold we come unto thee, for thou art the Lord our God.*

Consider, others dreadful ruin hath been your warning, that are now locked up in that dark Dungeon, and shall come up no more, and whom the Devils are now tormenting, the worm biting, and the fire burning. You are at present free from that boiling Cauldron, and in the Land of the Living; O praise, praise the Lord for his long suffering, you being but, as it were, under a reprieve; O prize, and improve your life, and timely prepare for death; for if thy life were ended, thy soul separated, and not peace with God made, thou wert an undone

done soul : There's no place for Repentance in the Grave, no Christ or pardon to be obtained in Hell. Bless God your glass runneth, your Lamp burneth, the day of grace is yet continued, your dear Lord upon the mercy-seat, therefore there is hope.

Use 2. This justly reprehendeth all that slight or neglect this great duty, but especially these three sorts : none of which do seriously consider their latter end.

Viz. { 1. *The insolent Atheistical Sensualists.*
 2. *The Ignorant and Inconsiderate.*
 3. *The self-confident and presumptuous.*

1. It condemneth *Atheistical Sensualists* that put the evil day far from them, *Amos vi. 3.* and who drown or banish the awful thoughts of God, Death, and Eternity, out of their minds and hearts, *They take the Timbrel and Harp, and rejoice at the sound of the Organ, and say unto God, depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways, Job xxi. 12, 14. God is not in all their thoughts, Psal. x. 4.* They are resolved for a short life and a merry one, whatever be the dreadful issue.

issue. *They chant to the sound of the Viol, and drink Wine in Bowls, and eat the Lambs out of the flock, and stretch themselves upon their Couches, saying in their hearts, as that wretch, Luke xii. 19. Take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry: They will satisfy their lusts, enjoy the pleasures of the flesh, walk in the ways of their hearts, and in the sight of their eyes; and hereby they make the breach wider, and themselves seven times more the Children of the Devil, though at last they sit down in everlasting sorrow. Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die.*

You poor, desperately deluded souls! did you believe what you have read and heard of the other World, or what the Scripture of infallible verity speaketh of the infinitely, holy, great, and terrible God (who will in no wise clear the guilty) you would quickly change your Course. Did you now consider you must die, and be judged; that in a very little time, you who hear me this day, must stand before the dreadful God; would you sin so freely, love the World so immoderately, mock at a Deity, jeer at a serious Piety, neglect your Duty, trifle away your Time, forget Eternity, and hazard these your precious souls, as you have

have done, and do? Such Rake-hells, and Devils incarnate, the Apostle speaks of, 2 *Pet.* iii. 10. *Know this first, i. e. before the end of the World: There shall come in the last days, scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, where is the promise of his coming?* Nevertheless, these Vipers, vile Miscreants, and Monsters in mens shape, think that they are wise, when indeed they have no understanding. Wise they are, but it is to do evil, to cavil against the Truth, dispute against a life of Holiness, *but to do good they have no knowledge,* Jer. iv. 22.

This was *Jerusalem's* great sin immediately before the fierce anger of the Lord came upon them; and this is the sad, and dreadful case of many, yea, thousands in the World, and in these Nations; notwithstanding all those awaking, desolating providences, and amazing spectacles of mortality their eyes have seen.

There are but a few that look upon themselves concerned at all, just like a company of idle Sheep in a fat pasture. The Butcher cometh and fetcheth one to-day, another to-morrow, the rest feed on, and take no notice of what is become of their lost companions. 'Tis as if a company of condemned persons (re-
prieved

prieved for a time) should be appointed to be executed one after another, within the space of so many days. This day the first in order is brought forth and executed, the day following a second; yet all the rest that are to take their turns, fall a Drinking, Carding, Singing, Swearing, and so continue till the very last, until they be all Hang'd, Dead, and Damn'd. We may compare this mad deluded World to a company of poor blind men dancing about the brink of a very dangerous deep pit, but do not perceive it, or see how each falleth in one after the other; a first, second, and third drops down, the rest not discerning the danger, run the round: I shall thus apply it. This day or hour a swearer tumbleth down to hell. The next a drunkard. This evening or morning the pale Horse mounteth one, it may be a cursed Atheist, or a malicious, bloody persecutor, or filthy Adulterer, or an Idolatrous Worldling, and carrieth him to the place of Darkneſs. The next day he receiveth his Commission to fetch some more of them; those their brethren in iniquity, that are left behind, keep and continue their course, and dance about the Pit, not considering they so must die,
and

and come to judgment. How little do the living lay to heart this great business of their Mortality, insomuch, that when they would deny a thing with greatest confidence, they will commonly say, they thought no more of it than of their dying day, as if death were not a matter of any moment, but rather a meer toy or trifle, not to be regarded, *She remembereth not her last end*, Lam. i. 9.

You self-destroying sinners! Do you know that you must die, and leave the World for ever? and are you so stupified and mad, as not to think of death in many days together, yea, hardly to entertain a serious thought of death and Judgment at a house of mourning; in the very sight of the dead you can be vain, frothy, jest, pot, pipe, feast, discourse of the world; a sad proof that men do not consider their latter end. Some at that solemn and sad season, seem a little serious, but as soon as the dead Corps is removed, and the Grave and Coffin out of sight, Death is no more remembred. To make you sensible of this folly, let me reason with you in a few plain hints.

What, no thoughts of death, you that have been under a sentence of death,

death, and brought to the very pit's brink, looking into eternity! O how sad is it to think how quickly thoughts and impressions of your mortality, have worn out, and past away! Sinners! remember, and forget not these secret vows, promises and engagements, you then made to God, (*viz.*) that you would part with sin, leave your wicked company, sit loose to the world, live godly, and make it your business to be Religious, and lose no more of your precious time, and opportunities for your soul: if you have forgotten it, the all-seeing, and heart-searching God remembers it. Know and consider in thy heart, that Death that did but warn thee then, by sending his summons, will shortly come himself.

Forgetful of death! and made of dust, born of a Woman, and under a decree not to be revoked by men or Angels! *Heb. ix. 27. Job. xiv. 3. As for man, his days are determined, the number of his months are with thee, thou hast appointed his bounds, that he cannot pass.*

Not mind your death, You that have sickly, weak, diseased bodies, full of pains and aches, that are so many partial quotidian deaths? yea, a dying daily?

ly? What. put off the thoughts of death! thou that hast been at so many Funerals, heard so many passing Bells, or knells, seen so many Graves, Skulls, and Coffins, before thine eyes! Forget your death! and yet sinners, sinning daily, carrying the cause and sting of death in your bosoms! *mors in corpore*, the body is dead because of sin, *Rom. viii. 21.* Thy body is but a body of death, sin hath killed it, the sentence is past, *Gen. iii. The wages of sin is death, Rom. vi. 1. The Soul that sins must die Ezek. xviii. 20.* What, put off this evil day! and dead in part, old and cold, having one foot in the grave, *viz.* feeble knees, trembling hands, wrinkled faces, grey or bald heads, the Grave being ready for you? What, no more serious thoughts of death! And so many pieces and parcels of yourselves gone before to this long home: So many Relations and Children, now asleep in the dust of Death? are they buried in perpetual oblivion, never to be remembered more?

What, sinner! what not think of death! and Death at thy very heels, and before thine eyes: whither can you direct your eyes, and not see that which preacheth or representeth death? All the
winter

winter death is on the trees, in our Gardens, in every Flower; at your Table every day you feed on the flesh of dead Creatures, to tell you that you must die; and is not death in your Beds every night? What is sleep, but the picture and image of cold death? and your beds, but the representation of your dark Graves?

O careless, besotted sinners! not consider of Death, and have precious souls, that must live or die, be saved or damned, to Heaven or Hell, to bless or burning, to God or Devils, to Saints or cursed Reprobates, as soon as the breath is gone, which may be the next day or hour: This pale Horse, Death, hath the red Horse Hell following him, *Rev. vi. 8.* Lastly, what not think of, and prepare for Death! and called Christians, that profess you believe the Resurrection of the Body, and the Life everlasting, a happiness beyond the Grave. *For if in this life only (saith Paul) we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable, 1 Cor. xv. 19.*

Poor hardened sinners! that now forget God, and this great and mighty concern of your immortal souls, what will

will you do in the day of Visitation, when the iniquity of your heels shall compass you about, and no friend in Heaven above, or in Earth beneath, that can stand you in stead? and when Conscience, like a bold, sturdy Serjeant, shall take you by the throat, and summon you in the name of the great Judge, to come and stand at or before the Judgment Seat. *Understand ye brutish among the people, and ye fools, when will ye be wise?* Psal. xciv. 8. to understand this, to provide for your latter end.

2. This blames the *ignorant, pettish, and inconsiderate soul*, who in an angry fit or passion, wisheth for death out of a base end, *viz.* as a writ of ease, or out-let to present pain, poverty, sickness, and other worldly troubles and perplexities, not rightly considering how terrible Death is, or what the dreadful consequences of it are. Now, that you may be convinced of this sin and folly, give me leave to tell you, that between the worst, longest, and deepest miseries and calamities of this life, and those after death, there is no proportion, but an exceeding distance.

Poor deluded Souls! what is the bite of a Flea, to the sting of a Serpent?

or

or a scratch on the hand to a stab at the heart? What's the heat and smart of a little candle to a hot fiery furnace, or a devouring flame? What is a drop of Gall to a Sea or Ocean of poison? Or, what is pain, torture or anguish for an hour, to intolerable misery, time without end, into which, to the Unconverted, Death will certainly be the door? And are you so mad to imagine, that there is nothing in the other World to be feared or felt, worse than outward pressures, perils, pains, which are but bodily miseries, and that but for a moment? This sin, not only the prophane World are guilty of, but some of those that profess the name of God. *Rebecca* said to *Isaac*, *I am weary of my life, because of the Daughters of Heth*, Gen. xxvii. 46. *Rachel* cries out, *Give me Children, or I die*, Gen, xxx. 1. *Elisba* being threatened by *Jezabel*, said, *O Lord, take away my life*, 1 Kings xvi. 4. *Jonah* for the loss of a Gourd, said, *It is better for me to die, than to live*, and told God to his face, that *he did well to be angry even unto death*, Jonah iv. 9. The *Israelites*, when they wanted water, wished they had died in the Wilderness. These and the like wicked wishes are in the mouths
of

of many poor, ignorant, discontented persons, who long to be out of this wretched World.

Now, by way of conviction, I shall lay down these following particulars.

1. What think you of these inward and soul straits, and conflicts wherewith God's poor afflicted people are sadly exercised! And were you but sensible of the guilt and weight of sin, a wounded spirit, the wrath of God, and those everlasting burnings; it would quickly swallow up your outward miseries, tho' never so many. This is evident in the example of the Jaylor, who for the loss of his Prisoners was so tormented, that he would have killed himself before he was convinced of the dreadful state of his soul that was in danger of ruin, *Acts xvi. 27, 28, 29, 30. Then he fell down, and cried out, Sirs, what shall I do to be saved?*

2. To wish for Death, because of the evils attending this life, is very wicked and dangerous, interpretatively, and in effect, it is to wish your souls in Hell.

Consider and mind this also, that your present sorrows, crosses, troubles, of what kind or degree soever they be, are the fruit of your ill doing, and far less than

than you deserve ; for its a wonder you are not in Hell ! and will you dare to be so audacious as to fly in the face of your faithful Creator, when you should be deeply sensible of your horrible wickedness, and humble under God's hand, and accepting the punishment of your sin, ye should repent, and turn to God ; take away the cause, and the effect will cease.

3. You can please and gratify the Devil, your deadly adversary, in nothing more ; you wish for death, so doth the Devil too ; if you are his now, you must be his then, his here, and his for ever : He waits and longs that your breath were gone, your souls separated ; therefore he would have you poison, hang, drown, starve, or stab yourselves, that you might be dead, damned, and burned with him in Hell.

4. Moreover, if you are dead, you would suddenly repent, and change your mind, and, if it might be, give the World to be alive again, with all the wants, pains, and grief you now endure. Had you but a peeping Hole into Hell, to see and hear what they endure, you would confess your sins, judge yourselves, and close with Christ before you
H die,

die, that so you might not come into that dreadful place of torment. Now that you may hear and fear, and do no more so wickedly, let me ask you :

1. What think you of the sting and bitterness of death, when a man comes to die, Conscience being awakened, roaring like a Lion, Death, the King of Terrors, standing by, when the guilt of past sins, and loss of precious time, will be as so many fiery darts, and stinging Scorpions, biting and gnawing on the Heart ? What think you it will be to die unconverted, to die in a state of sin and wrath, a Traitor to God in a state of unbelief and impenitency (the Soul-damning sins) to die with an evil heart, an accusing Conscience, self-condemned, cast in your own breast to die, to die, which is worst of all.

2. What think you of the sadness and amazing terror of approaching Judgment, the second Death ; when a man comes to take a dreadful view of the other world, and begins to reflect, and think, wherefore was I born ? What have I been doing ? are all these my sins ? O, where shall I leave them ? or how shall I be rid of them, now I am dying ? Whither am I going ? What will be my com-

company? Where shall be my place? and how near am I to it? What must I endure? and how long? how long? And Conscience will answer, to Eternity, misery without end. This will amaze, confound, and overwhelm the Soul with fear and perturbation, when it sees that Heaven is lost, and that it must down, down, to the Region of darkness, and company of Devils, in that state of everlasting woe. The killing thoughts of which made a great man wish, that he might live, tho' but the life of a Toad.

3. What think you of the impartiality of the Judge, that will not spare the guilty, must and will judge and sentence according to the Fact, and reward every man according to his works? He would not spare the Angels that sinned, but cast them down to Hell, 2 *Pet.* ii. 4. nor *Adam*, but cast him out of Paradise, and set a flaming Sword against him, neither will he spare any impenitent sinner in the day of his wrath; Justice obliges him to justify the Righteous, and condemn the Wicked.

4. What think you of the impossibility of having any appeal? There will be no *Moses* to meditate, no mediator to plead, no *Daniel*, *Noah*, *Job*, to inter-

cede, or to stand in the gap, not an Intercessor in Earth or Heaven, to be found to speak a word. There can be no appeal to God; his Calls and Counsels have been refused, his Interest opposed, his Enemies countenanced, his Laws violated, his Anger will burn like fire. No appeal to Jesus Christ; his Government hath been slighted, and Grace and person rejected: Or to the Holy Ghost, he hath been quenched and grieved, or to Angels or Saints, all will be against you.

5. What think you of the resignation of soul and body to the Executioner and Tormentor, the red Dragon? 'Tis sad to see a poor Malefactor committed to the Jaylor or Hangman, but O how much more dreadful will it be for ever-living souls in the face of Men and Angels, to be delivered into the hands of that raging, roaring Lion, the Devil. When God, the righteous Judge, shall say, in sight of the whole World, here are the men that brake my Statutes, prophaned my Sabbaths, that hated my Saints, that served the Devil, in the satisfying their Lusts, the open and professed adversaries to my name and Interest; that would not, tho' I often in-
treated

treated them, come at my call, accept of my Love, receive my Son, or endure a life of holiness, or by any means be drawn, and perswaded to think of, and prepare for Death and Judgment, tho' they had time and opportunity enough. Now take them Devil, and away to Hell with them, for my soul abhorreth them. Thy Covenant servants and voluntary slaves they were in time, and thy prisoners in chains of darkness they shall be to Eternity, to be tormented day and night for ever, *Rev. xx. 10.*

6. What think you of the eternal banishment and separation from God, Christ, Angels, Saints, Heaven? This is the punishment of loss, and the worst of Hell, *Matt. xxv. 41. Then shall ye say unto them on the left hand, Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire prepared for the Devil and his Angels. O terrible, terrible!* to be doom'd or sentenc'd to lie under the wrath and hatred of the infinitely great and dreadful God for ever and ever, as long as God shall live, whose Being is to eternity as long as there is a Devil to torment, or to be tormented, shall their plague last. The fearful and unbelieving, and the abominable Murderers, Whoremongers, Liars, Dogs,

Sorcerers, carry all their sin down to Hell with them, the fuel that feeds the wrath of God; so that the oil of sin causes the lamp of wrath to burn and flame everlastingly. The debt of sin can never be paid, Justice never satisfied, and the damned souls remain impenitent, and God implacable; so that there can be no hope of pardon. The sentence is strict, unchangeable, irreversible, eternal. O Eternity! Eternity! this stings, plagues and augments, and aggravates the most intolerable punishment of the damned; after innumerable thousands of years, they shall think it but the beginning of their sorrows, and shall be so far from an end, as if they had been in Hell but an hour. It will be everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and the glory of his power, 2 *Thess.* i. 9. In comparison of which, all the rendings, rackings tearings, torturings of mens bodies here, by the most exquisite torments upon racks, gibbets, wheels, gridirons, boiling lead, boiling oil, and other bloody invented engines and instruments of amazing cruelty, are but a flea-biting.

Sinners! 'tis *Hell, Hell*, that will make the sadly tormented Soul seek death, wish
and

and long for that which shall never be, Rev, ix. 6. And will you desire and wish for the woeful day? God forbid! Now your condition may be changed; then it will be stated. *Woe, woe* unto you that desire the day of the Lord, to what end is it for you? *The day of the Lord is darkness, and not light*, Amos v. 18. *A day of Gloominess, a day of Clouds, and of thick darkness, at which the people should be much pained, and all faces shall gather blackness, the Inhabitants of the Land shall tremble, for the day of the Lord is very terrible*, Joel ii. Now therefore do not wickedly wish it, but wisely consider and prepare for it: And blessed is that Servant whom, when his Lord cometh, findeth so doing.

3. It reproves the *self-confident and presumptuous*, who conclude upon a fitness and preparedness for death and judgment upon very slight and unwarrantable grounds; namely, because they separate from the notorious wicked, are not prophane, make a profession, shew some legal sorrow for sin, run the round of duty; though carnal and heartless enough in those duties; from hence they easily persuade themselves that all is well,

viz. that they are the Children of God, in a state of Grace, and going to Heaven, and as fit to die as the very best. How many thousands are there in the Christian world, who securely sleep and dream of an interest in Christ, that hope and promise themselves a future and glorious felicity, who are but meer moral men, and worse, or rotten painted hypocrites at the best, having only a form of godliness, restraining, counterfeit, or common grace? Such Scribes and Pharisees are the foolish Virgins, and yet confident to the very last, they came to the door, with *a Lord, Lord, open unto us.* They had blazing Lamps, but no oil in their Lamps or Vessels; no real Union with Jesus Christ, no precious Faith, no sincere love or evangelical repentance, the root of the matter was not in them.

You that have a mind to live, take heed you be not deceived; if you are not truly united unto Jesus Christ, he will certainly disown you. The Lord Jesus tells us of such sadly deluded souls that shall stand up at the last day, and challenge a reward in Heaven, to whom he will protest, *I know you not, Matt. vii. 23.* They never savingly knew him, had never any union or communion with Christ

in

in the World. *Many are called, but few chosen: The Children of the Kingdom (saith Christ) shall be cast out.* And I must tell you, who ever comes to Heaven, will miss many there which they thought to find, and find others there they little expected. The sinners in *Sion* are more than a few, the Goats more than the Sheep, the Tares more than the Wheat, more reprobate Silver than pure tried Gold. The pure in heart, and truly godly man that mourns and bleeds for sin, that loves God, and prizes Christ above the world, is many times full of fears and doubts about his soul, and the eternal condition of it: O what would he not give to be assured that all is well beteen God and him? to know that God and Christ is his, that he is fit to live or die; because a mistake here is very dreadful, and of infinite consequence. But on the contrary, the foolish, disobedient, that are deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in sin, and alienated from the life of God, having no hope, and without God in the World, are highly confident, and strongly perswaded, that it shall go well with them in the World to come. I knew a poor, ignorant, prophane wretch, being

told on his death-bed (and but a little before he entred into eternity) that death was come, replied, where is it, I will go forth and meet it? Putting his legs over the bed, in a little time gave up the ghost. Therefore in this great soul-affair, let none be so fool hardy as to trust without trial. *But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself and not in another; for every man shall bear his own burden,* Gal. vi. 4, 5.

Quest. If the consideration of our latter end is of so much moment, *Why do men and women that have immortal souls, think no more of it?*

Ans. 1. The great cause is from that horrid, cursed Atheism and Unbelief, which is deeply rooted and revited in mens minds and hearts. They do not credit that wondering and astonishing Doctrine of the other World, according to the belief of which they must live or die to all eternity.

If we should take a serious prospect of endless eternity, and of those great things men seem to believe, namely, that they must die, that in every man's body there is a never-dying Soul, that there will be a different and unchangeable state of men after death, and that
without

without holiness, real holiness of heart and Life, no man shall see the Lord; and compare the lives and practices of those that pretend to believe these things, and we may see them as busy as a company of Ants in a sunny day, and that the general course of men hath no tendency toward this end, but indeed a sad and woeful incongruity.

2. The second Cause is want of spiritual and divine wisdom. It was for want of that *wisdom* which is from above, that the *Israelites* did not consider, O *that they were wise!* said God. *They are a Nation void of Counsel, neither is there any understanding in them,* Deut. xxxii.

28. If men were wise for their precious and eternal souls, they would consider what is here to be done, and what is like to be their condition in the other World. The prudent man foreseeth the evil, or considereth the evil, and hideth himself. When God by the mouth of *Moses* threatned to plague the *Egyptians* by the Pestilence, Hail and Fire, He that believed and feared the word of the Lord, among the servants of *Pharaoh*, made his servants and cattle flee into the house and were preserved, *Exod.* ix.

20. So the Soul that is truly wise to

consider of the danger of being destroyed by the grievous hail and fire of God's wrath, will flee into the *hiding place*, viz. under the wing of the great and glorious *Mediator*, where alone there is true succour. But he that did not fear or consider of the danger, left his Servants and Cattle in the fields, and were destroyed, *Exod. ix. 21, 25.*

3. The third hindrance is Sensuality, worldly pleasure, and cares; these carry away the heart from true consideration. The *Israelites* confluence of creature comforts, caused them to forsake and forget God, *Deut. xxxii. 14, 15, 16, 17, 18.* The old World was Eating, Drinking, Marrying, and giving in Marriage, not considering of their danger, till the flood came and took them away, *Matt. xxiv. 28, 29.* The men of the Earth do so mind Earthly things, that their hearts are surfeited and drunken with the cares of it, *Luke xii. 34*; and while mens minds and thoughts are carried so vehemently after the world, to make provision for their life, they can think but little of their death, *Luke xii 15, 16, 17, 18.*

4. The fourth obstruction is a plague upon the heart, and desperate security
pro-

proceeding from it. No bonds next to death are so strong to keep men under, as security and senselessness of Spirit. So dead a sleep possesseth most of the ungodly World, that they are past feeling, and become so stark dead, that the voice of God in the dreadful threatnings of his Word, and the alarm of his amazing, tremendous Judgments, and desolating providences prevail not to awaken them. The Lord hath poured out upon them the spirit of a deep sleep, and hath (in judgment) closed their eyes, that they can sin in the very face of the Judge, at the very brink of Hell, at the very mouth and entrance into that great gulf of Eternity.

5. A fifth hindrance to mens consideration of their latter end, is a strong delusion of heart, or Satanical suggestions. The old Serpent, and desperately deluded hearts, make them dream that God is all love, that they shall have a long life, that preparation for Death and Eternity is a short work; and that it may be done at any time, namely, when they have done with the world, when they are old, or lying on a sick bed. They say in their hearts, 'tis but believing, or repenting, and saying the Lord have
mercy

mercy on me, let me die the death of the Righteous. Under this deadly delusion they dream of heaven, and go laughing to Hell, 1 *Thess.* v. 3.

And that which doth much increase this stupidity, may be the want of, or neglect of a powerful and soul-searching Ministry, whose office, as watchmen, is to foresee the danger, and to warn and awaken secure sinners, crying aloud to them in the name of the Lord, *Awake thou that sleepest, arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light*, Eph. v. 14. But some cannot endure that Ministers should be so severe, plain and piercing in their Doctrine, so as to thunder and lighten in the eyes and ears of sleepy souls; they are well contented to sit under those that daub with untempered Mortar, and who sow Pillows for their Arm-holes, under whose Ministry they may take a nap, and sleep it out. But they hate him that reproveth in the gate, that galls, cuts, and wounds their Conscience, just like the galled backed horse that bites and kicks at him that would heal him.

A person of no mean quality, speaking his opinion of several Ministers, said, such a man I can hear, and such a one

I can here very well, but the third he mentioned, that was wont to lay the ax to the root of the tree and grapple with the heart : I cannot endure to hear him, for he always grates upon my Conscience.

6. Men do not consider their latter end, because they are afraid to do it.

1. First, to wonton sinners, the remembrance of Death is a bitter Pill that will not suffer the pleasure of sin to go down so sweetly. Therefore they say to the thoughts of Death, as the Governor to *Paul*, *Go thy way for this time, when I have a convenient season, I will send for thee*. Serious thoughts of Death and Judgment to come, as the hand-writing on the wall, will damp the spirits, and mar the mirth of the greatest Prince or Gallant in the World.

2. They fear to think of Death, because they have made no preparation for it, (*viz*) They have not believed, repented, lived a life of holiness, so as to make their God their Friend. A bankrupt that oweth many hundred pounds more than he is worth, is afraid to cast up his accompts : So poor and impenitent sinners that are indebted to God, that owe him ten thousand Talents, are un-

unwilling to think of Death, because Death will say unto them, Come, give an account of your Stewardship, for you must pay the utmost farthing.

3. They are afraid to think of Death, by reason of the dreadful consequences of death, as it relates to both Worlds. The change that death makes as to this present World, is very amazing.

1. It brings unavoidably a dissolution or separation of Soul and Body, these two dear companions, that have lived and conversed together, and sinned together, for many years, must then part, and a living man will become a dead carcass, fit for nothing but a grave, and the soul must have another habitation, *Job xvii. 13, 14. Job xix. 26.* Well might Death be called *The King of Terrors.*

2. It is a matter of fear to leave this World, that hath been so pleasing and delightful, and for which you have toiled and laboured so many years, in one night to lose it all! for when the departing hour cometh, you may take a view of all your comforts which you have had under the Sun, and Helps of
Heaven,

Heaven, (*viz.*) Husbands, Wives, Parents, Children, Kinsfolks, Friends, jolly Companions, Gold, Silver, Houses, Lands, sweet and delicate Banquets, pleasing bargains, and say, we must now part, farewell for ever: we shall never see or enjoy you more, we shall never eat, drink, or converse more, buy or sell more: all our fleshly and sensual delights are ended, our joy, our mirth is ceased, and all the blessed advantages for our salvation now will terminate. Farewell the means of Grace, and all the golden opportunities for our souls; farewell all those faithful Ministers that we have heard; farewell all those powerful awakening Sermons that have sounded in our ears; farewell all the blessed Sabbaths, farewell all the Counsels, Examples, Reproofs, Prayers of our serious and religious Friends and Relations, we shall never see the face of a Minister more, or hear a Sermon more, never have the door of Grace and life opened to us any more for ever. And what remains, but a doleful remembrance of those good things that are past and gone, and a severe strict account that is yet behind?

O dreadful change, and loss indeed ! to them that make the World their home, that have their Heaven on this side Heaven, and no provision or portion beyond the grave. The thoughts of which made a wicked young man (very thriving in the World) to utter these words, *If I live, I shall be a rich man; but this is the plague of it I must die*; which accordingly came to pass not long after.

3. No wonder death is so terrible, for after death the judgment. Death is a Pursuivant that summons guilty souls to come, and give an account at God's dreadful Bar. And what more terrible to the Malefactor than the sight and presence of an angry Judge? While *Paul* reasoned of Judgment, *Felix* trembled, and bid him be gone, that Doctrine did so gall him, that he could not endure it, *Acts* xxiv. 25.

Use 2. The Second use is to exhort, persuade, and stir you up, to put this duty of so great and infinite concernment into practice. O, Sirs, I Beseech you to entertain some timely thoughts of your dying hour, that death and you may be more familiar. The best friend you have
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in Heaven and Earth, longs to see it done; *O that there were such an heart in them!*

Now, if you would do any thing in this blessed work (*viz,*) to prepare for death and Judgment, it must be done, 1. *Suddenly* 2. *Seriously* 3. *Effectually!*

1. It must be done *Suddenly*, it's a business of that importance that must not be neglected or delayed for a moment's time. Did you but see that you are upon the confines of Eternity, and in danger every day of being undone for ever, you would quickly come to a resolution. To further and encourage you: Consider,

1. Life (as dear and precious as it is) is very uncertain. What a nothing is this life? A wind, a vapour, a dream, a breath, a bubble.

How soon may the Thread be cut, the Glass run, or this bright burning Lamp be dim, and out, when how, or where this short dying life will terminate, thou dost not know? whether at home or abroad, among thy friends or strangers, in the field or house, at thy table, or in thy bed, who can tell?

2. Death may come suddenly. When the pale Horse will set forth, whether in the
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the morning, or at mid-day, or midnight, no man can tell thee. There is a fatal hour which none can pass, *Luke* xii. 12, 20. *Psal.* lxxiii. 18, 19. *Psal.* lxiv. 71. *Thef.* v. 3.

3. When death comes, it strikes sure. This King of Terrors on the pale horse always rides the circuit, and doth execution wherever he cometh, no shield or buckler, or armour of proof can defend us, no, not an army or guard of men or Angels. If dreadful Death finds a King on his Throne, or a beggar on the Dunghill, it's all a case. The strength of a man, though a *Sampson*, this great Leviathan, death, counts but a straw; death doth his work speedily, easily, witness the last plague, I shall add here.

1. Death's calls, warning, and alarms, are very frequent, not one of you but have had many a call and knock, to mind you of Death.

2. Death's commands are peremptory; he brings his writ along with him. Death comes in the name of the terrible Judge, and takes his commission out of the Court of Heaven, in order to the accomplishment and execution of an eternal and irrevocable decree, so that
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he must do his work, will have his errand. If a man had Mines of Gold and Silver to give, it cannot deliver from the arrest of this inexorable Serjeant.

3. Death's Conquest is great. I know thou wilt bring me to death, and the place appointed for all living. What man is he that liveth, and shall not see death? Thou hast set his bounds that he can't pass. They that have conquered Kingdoms and countries, and carried all before them, have been subjected by death. When death comes and takes a man by the throat, though the proudest, stoutest, strongest in the World, he must go, willing or unwilling, 'tis all one to death. 'Tis observable, that of bad men, their souls are not resigned, but taken away. What is the hope of the Hypocrite, tho' he hath gained, when God taketh away his Soul, *Job xxvii. 8, 20.* A tempest stealeth him away in the night. This night shall thy soul be required, death will not stay one night. 'Tis in vain for them that are strong and lively, to say to death, go to the wrinkled faces, to the grey heads, to the pale cheeks, to the naked backs, the dry bones,

bones, to the dry breasts, meddle not with this young man, strike not this comely beautiful woman, that is in the flower and prime of Nature. Go to yonder consumptive, declining, decaying, dying old man, go to that weak withered old woman. Let me alone to be excused, O but death regards it not. For this great Conqueror Death, knocks as often at the young man's door, as at the door of the old Woman. Death arrests and carrieth away the strong, the healthy, the rich, the honourable, the learned, Prisoners, to the Grave, as often as the weak, the sickly, the poor, the base and ignorant.

2. You are to do it *Seriously*, with thy soul: the living will lay it to heart, *Eccles. vii. 2.* The dead cannot; there's no device in the Grave; then go about it now in good earnest, before old age and death cometh.

3. Do it *effectually*, go through with work, leave it not undone, or but done to halves, let every lust be mortified every duty performed, every grace exercised. As good never a whit, as never the nearer. Now you have opportunity before you, the day of
grace

grace is continued, Christ is at the door, open to him, and make all sure; for if ever thou be justified, pardoned, sanctified, it must be now. The considerations to persuade you, are these following.

Motive 1. Consider there is an absolute and indispensable necessity for the doing of it; a present necessity; an infinite and eternal necessity: other things may be done, this must be done, and it is more than time this great work were done and finished. It is the grand business of your life, timely and truly to prepare for death and judgment. It were better that all your concerns in the World were wholly neglected, namely, Husband, Wife, Children, Buying, Selling, Seed-time, Harvest omitted, and let all run to ruin, than to hazard, lose, and undo your souls, for this will certainly ruin body and soul for ever.

O seriously mind how little you have done in the time of your life past, and how incapable you will be to do any thing at the end of time, when you come to take up your lodgings in a Grave.

Grave. O remember the days of darkness, they will be many, *Ecclef. i. 18.* They that have been in the Grave a thousand years have done nothing, neither can you when you come there. Now for you that have lived some 20. 30, 40, 50, or 60 years, and done nothing in order to a preparation for your everlasting state, it is high time to begin the work.

The most of you are so senseless, as not to consider, or entertain a thought of death, till you hear the Bell, or see a Grave or Coffin, or till Death comes within your Walls, and knocks at your Bed's-head: When you see a Friend, a Child; a Brother, a Husband, or Wife, gasping and dying, till you see him bedewed with his cold sweats, and groaning with dying pangs, till your eyes thus affect your hearts, your hearts are seldom affected with the sense of your mortality; Now sith it must be done, and done suddenly, resolve, in spite of Men and Devils, and all the World, to set about the work.

Motive 2. Consider, *It may be done,* you are in a capacity to do it, adored for ever be free Grace!

1. Time

1. Time and opportunity is yet before you. The Torch burns, the Sun shines, yet it is day, though not morning, some sands are behind, though not a whole glass. Some of you are old, lame, deaf, but not dead; others weak, sick, languishing, but alive. If the Sun were set, the Candle out, the Glass run, farewell all hope of Heaven, or of altering your condition for ever. They that are gone down to the dead, and among the damned, may, and do reflect with torment upon the opportunities once offered to make them happy, but can call back none; that is impossible.

2. God is willing to help, if you go to him: *Thine is the power*; and he gives it to them that have no strength, *Isa. xl.* Duty is ours, Assistance and Success is God's. That God who hath given thee a considering season, can also give a considering soul; go to him upon thy knees, and beg as for thy life, his speedy aid; and say as the Woman to *David*, *help O King*; or as the Father for the distressed Son, *Mark ix. 22.* *If thou canst do any thing, help us.* Christ did help us; *Seek and ye shall find.* But it cannot be

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said so of separated souls, because time and means are gone for ever.

Then, in the Name of the Lord, quit yourselves like men, wise men, that are indued with precious, rational, considering souls, that differenceth you from Brutes; let that noble faculty of reason be executed in considering your latter end. For consideration is a serious, eager, and lively act or exercise of the understanding about things to be done, or not to be done, furthering or impeding the execution of them, as it sees good. It is the exercise of the mind and heart; these are at work in this Divine consideration. *Contemplatio* (as one observes) looks upon things, as the eye upon the Object; *Judicium* discerneth things whether good or bad; but Meditation or Consideration is a further inquisition into the truth. Set Consideration at work, and not like Brutes, suffer your eyes, ears, lusts, and senses to be your guides, but commune with your hearts, consider your ways, reflect upon your actions, look to your end; which if you did, you would not be so sensual, so sinful, as you have been and are, *Isa. i. 3.*

Motive 3. Consider the omitting or neglect of it will render you the worst of fools.

fools. If the doing of it be your highest wisdom, the not doing it must needs be the greatest folly; this will make you like *Ephraim*, a silly Dove without an heart. Do you know that you must die, and die but once? And will you not endeavour to do that well, which cannot be done the second time? As *Luther* said to his adversaries, *You can kill me but once, ye are not able to raise me to life again and kill me the second time*: So say I to thee, O thou secure sinner, when thy breath is gone, it will return no more.

O consider with a trembling heart, how much depends upon this dying once! namely, the gaining or losing of thy dear precious Soul, the gaining or losing of the favour of God, the fruition of God; the joys of Heaven, or the torments of Hell hangs upon it.

When death comes, your eternity is cast; the very next moment after you have shot the black and amazing gulph, you shall see and know what you shall be, and where you shall be to all eternity. And will you judge the men of the earth, or worldly wise men, the wisest men, who take care for the body, and neglect the Soul? that make provision for time,

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but none for eternity? O, Sirs, if you would but trace them to a sick Bed, a Death-bed, from thence into eternity, and to God's dreadful Tribunal, you might easily determine, *Jer.* xvii. 11. *Luke* xii. 19. 20. and xvi. 22, 23. *Revel.* vi. 25.

Motive 4. In a very little time your present, powerful, and awakening helps and advantages to excite, and put you in mind of the other world, will be past and gone. And these are chiefly three, viz.
 1. Awakening Ordinances. 2 Awakening Providences. 3. Awakening Convictions.

1. *Awakening Ordinances* will have an end. The faithful, powerful Ministers of the Gospel, that watch for your souls, and whose office it is to fire the Beacons, and give the Alarm, will, we know not how soon, finish their work. These *Boanergeses*, and Ambassadors of the Lord, that preach the dreadful and amazing Doctrine of Death and Judgment, and that with loud and earnest cries, tears, and fervor of spirit, to make you sensible of your sin and danger, will shortly be called home. *Moses*, that great Prophet,

phet, after he had composed this excellent Song (of which my Text is a part) was gathered to his Fathers. *Noah*, that Preacher of Righteousness, after he had, for many years together, warned the old World, was called into the Ark, and they had never a Sermon more, till the wrath of God came upon them, and there was no remedy, 2 *Pet.* ii. 5. Be not therefore as your Fathers unto whom the former Prophets have cry'd, saying, *Turn ye from your evil ways, for they have not long to cry.* The Prophets do not live for ever, *Zech.* i. 4, 5. You cannot rationally expect always to hear the pleasant noise of *Aaron's Bells*, or the found of the Silver Trumpets, the Sun will go down over the Prophets; therefore while the Watchmen are upon the Walls, take warning, and finish your work while you have the light. O, Sirs, improve for your eternal advantage, those plain and powerful Sermons which you hear and read; and let it not be accounted legal Preaching. Who were more severe in their Preaching than our Lord, and his fore-runner? Whom we ought to imitate, otherwise we draw the horrible sin of blood-guiltiness upon our souls, *Ezek.* iii. 18, 19. It is observed, that there are

more dreadful Doctrines scattered up and down in the *New Testament*, than in the *Old*, the powerful application of which is very necessary both for secure sinners, and drowsy Saints. Holy *David*, after his fall, fell into a deep sleep, and did not awake, until *Nathan* came and told him plainly and particularly of his sin. And of the Virgins we read, while the Bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept, *Matth.* xxv. O how many sleepy Souls are there in the World, and in many Cities, Towns, and Parishes in this Nation, that will either living, dying, or after death, sadly bewail the not improving the labours of the faithful Pastors!

2. All your *awakening Providences*, by which God warns and calls, will have an end. The great and glorious God, for a long time together, hath been speaking and calling to us by his Word, and of late years he hath spoken by his dreadful Rod, and that very terribly. The Sword, the Plague, the Fire, the decay of Trade, and other Judgments, are the loud Voice of an angry God. Those Afflictions on our Families, Relations, Estates, Persons, are in order to the awakening us out of sleep,

sleep, and so for our profit. When *Manasseh* was among the thorns, and bound with fetters, and carried into *Babylon*, he besought the Lord, and humbled himself greatly, *2 Chron.* xxxiii. 11, 12, 13. After *Ephraim* was chastised, he awaked, turned, and repented, for the Bonds and Cords of Affliction do open the ear to instruction; when he sheweth them their work, and their transgression, and commandeth that they turn from Iniquity, *Job* xxxvi. 8, 9, 10. *Jer.* xxxi. 18, 19. Now to have a deaf ear to the Rod and Word, to be hardened, and secure, and go on in sin under awakening and amazing Providences is a dreadful Judgment, and that which ripens men for ruin, *2 Chron.* xxviii. 22. *This is that King Abaz*, who, in the time of his distress, did trespass yet more against the Lord, *Jer.* v. 3.

3. Your *awakening Convictions* will have an end too. Those secret and powerful workings, strivings, and strugglings of the Spirit of God under the Rod, and in the World, will be suspended. Christ will not always be at the door calling, knocking, and his spirit that is so much grieved and opposed, will not always strive and struggle with

your Hearts and Consciences, *Gen. vi. 3.* Now sinners, if you have any love or regard to your immortal Souls, before all these helps be taken away, be wise to consider, and prepare for your end: Lest God should speedily resolve and say to you as to the *Jews, Isa. i. 5.* *Why should ye be stricken any more?* Or, as *Hof. iv. 17.* *Ephraim is joined to Idols, let him alone.* They will have their Lusts, and they shall have them. *As I live, saith the Lord, this iniquity shall not be purged till you die.* Sith nothing will prevail, I am resolved, saith God, they shall never hear any awakening, soul-searching Sermon more, never have a Correction or Conviction more till they go down to Hell.

Motive 5. Consider that the earnest cries, tears, prayers of unbelievers, when they come to die, will be in vain, fruitless, and unsuccessful. Though you speak in the anguish of your souls, and complain in the bitterness of your spirits; when your flesh upon you shall have pain, and your souls within you shall

shall mourn, it will be to no purpose.

You that will not seek God betimes, and make supplication to the Almighty, that will not pray while you have time to pray, helps to pray, health to pray, encouragements to pray.

Now God invites, you may have an audience, your Prayers in a dying hour will be but the expressions of your fears and terrors, arising from the sense and nearness of your danger, when there will be but a step between your departing Souls, and the state of Devils: God seldom hears from some men, unless trouble, sickness, fear, distress, and anguish cometh upon them. Then pain will make them pray, and howl upon their beds; and it is but howling, not praying, *Hof. vii. 14. But will God bear his cry, when trouble cometh upon him? saith Job xxvii. 9. No, saith the Lord, I will not be enquired of by you, Ezek. xx. 3. Because it cometh from an evil mind, or stinking breath, proceeding from a corrupt, rotten, cursed heart, and then it must needs be abominable, Prov xxi. 17, and xv. 8. I will (saith David) wash mine hands in innocency, and then compass thine Altar; for if I regard ini-*

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quity in my heart, the Lord will not hear my Prayer, *Psal.* lxvi. 18. If God would not hear a *David's* Prayer, a man after God's own heart, he will not hear a Devil's Prayer, nor the Prayer of a Swearer, Sabbath-breaker, Drunkard; he heareth not finners that like and love their lusts. No, saith the Holy Ghost, though they seek me early, they shall not find me. Here note, that there is a twofold early, namely, Gods early, and man's early. God's early is in the morning of our life, in the time of youth, then God calls and invites to come, *Prov.* i. 24. *Eccles.* xii. 1. Man's early is in the Evening, or at the end of life, or when man is nigh unto death, when pain, sorrow, and anguish cometh upon him. In their afflictions they will seek me early, *Hos.* v. ult. When fear cometh as desolation, and destruction cometh as a whirlwind, then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me, *Prov.* i. 27. 28. God will say to all such sinners, remember it, as *Isaac* to *Abimelech*, *Gen.* xxvi. 27. *Wherefore come ye to me, seeing ye hate me, and have sent me away from you:* Or he will say, as once to the Children
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of *Israel*, that cryed to him in their sore distress, *Go cry to the Gods which ye have chosen, let them deliver you in the time of your tribulation; as for me, I will not deliver you,* Judg. x. 14. You have served the Devil, embraced the world, satisfied your lusts, joined with mine enemies; go to the Devil, go to your Lusts, to your wicked Company, let them deliver you in your distress: Now Death and Devils are come for you, I will not own you nor your Prayers; your soul abhorred me, and my soul abhors you and your Prayers, depart from me, I know you not.

Motive 6. It is the great comfort of the godly man's life to hope, and know that he is fit for Death. Whatever be their Lot and portion in this World, be assured it shall go well with them in the other World. Art thou in a state of Grace, at odds with sin, and truly in love with Christ and Holiness; be of good cheer, go thy way, and eat thy Bread with joy, and drink thy Wine with a merry heart, for the bitterness of Death is past. The King of Terrors that had the power of death, is conquered by the Lord of Life.

Life. Terrible Death that rides on the pale Horse, is dismounted by the dear Lord that rides on the white Horse, under whose bloody Cross thou mayest see him disarmed, wounded and dead: Death that reigned from *Adam* to *Moses*, is now swallowed up in Victory, *Isa.* xv. 8. *I will ransom thee from the power of the Grave; I will redeem thee from Death; O Death, I will be thy plagues; O Grave, I will be thy destruction.* The believing Soul is dead with Christ while he lives, *Rom.* vi. 8. And is delivered, not only from the damnation of sin, but the dominion of sin, and there is hope in his death. When he dieth, he shall die in the Lord, *Revel.* xiv. 13. He shall sleep in Jesus, 1 *Thess.* iv. 14. His end shall be peace, *Psal.* xxxvii. 37. This made the Apostle, after his sad conflict, *Rom.* vii. to triumph over this last enemy Death, 1 *Cor.* xv. 55.

Motive 7. If you should not prepare for death, yet you will wish you had, (as many do when it is too late.) You that are for making for the flesh, and so eagerly pursuing the World, and the things of it, when you shall be cast upon a bed of

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of languishing, you will wish, in the very torment of your minds, and flames of horror, O that I had parted with my sin! O that I had been careful to please and honor God, and to get an interest in Jesus Christ! Then should I now have died the death of the Righteous; but this I wholly slighted. I prosecuted the World with might and main, and got so many thousands for my Posterity, and I lived a merry and jovial life, but for my Soul, for my Eternity, things of infinite worth, I have done nothing, I forgot my Soul. Now here is the Messenger of Death come for me, to imprison my Body in the Grave, the Chambers of Darkness, and to carry my Soul I know not whither, I fear to Hell. *O that I had been wise to understand this! To consider my latter end.* What would I now give to live but a few years more, to make provision for this Soul, that must now enter into the gulf of endless eternity.

Motive 8. Consider, the gain will be exceeding great. As will appear by these following particulars.

1. Would you hate Sin as Hell, and be more truly holy, *Consider your latter*

ter end. This is most certain, that all the Antecedents, and dreadful consequences of death, spring and grow out of this bitter root. What is it that wounds, stings, pains, and kills? What is it that brings diseases, and threatens death? that murders the body, and that damns and burns the soul? what is it that doth necessitate thee to make use of Physic and Physicians whilst alive? and bringeth thee to a Coffin and Grave when thou art dead? Is it not sin which thou embracest in thy bosom?

You poor, blind, deluded souls, as little and as lovely as sin looks in your wanton eyes, it is the Mother and Nurse of all your miseries, hatched in Hell, the Devil's spawn or excrement. *He that committeth sin is of the Devil, 1 John iii. 8.* This is that evil thing and bitter, that hauls Death and Hell at the heels of it: Yea, that arms Death, Devils, and Hell against us. Were it not for this black, ugly, fierce, cruel and bloody Adversary, Law or Justice could not condemn us, Death could not kill us, Devils could not torment us, Hell could not burn us.

Sin

Sin is the Traitor and Murderer of your immortal souls, and those nails that will shortly dig your Graves: And will you hug, hide, and hold it fast? Will a Woman put a knife into her bosom, that hath killed or murdered her dear Child or Husband? No, by no means, it must be broken and cast away for ever. Now, Sirs, if Sin be the Enemy, use it as an Enemy or Murderer, kill it, take the sacrificing knife and cut the throat of it, or strike the heart-vein, and let it bleed until it dies. Deal by it, as *Samuel* by *Agag*, cut in pieces. Did you think seriously of Death and Hell, you would hate it to purpose, and say, away to Hell with it, from whence it came; and it would put you upon a desire and earnest endeavour after Holiness: being exposed to a dissolution, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy Conversation and godliness, 2 *Pet.* iii. 11. But if you forget death, you will make dreadful work, namely, your accounts greater, and Hell the hotter; you will increase your sin, and God will heap up wrath against the day of wrath. And if ever God shew mercy, it will cost you dear, your Souls must mourn, your hearts must break and bleed for sin; for unless you
repent,

repent, you will certainly be damned, *Luke xiii. 5.*

2. Would you speedily call off your hearts from the world, and lay up a treasure in Heaven, *Remember your latter end*: In the greatest affluence of worldly prosperity, always consider that you must die.

Poor worldlings! that make Gold your hope, whose plottings and ploddings are for earth. If Death and Eternity were more in your thoughts, you would let go that in your affections, which you cannot hold in your possession, and love that but a little that will be lost, and which you cannot love long; Riches have wings, and they will be gone. Consider how little the things of the World will stand you in stead in the evil day, your gold and silver cannot keep you from Diseases while you live; nor from Hell after you are dead, *Prov. xi. 4. Psal. xlix. 6, 7.*

It falleth out with many of the great storers of the World, as it doth with a Sumpter-horse, who all the day carrieth a great Treasure upon his back, but at night it is taken from him, and he thrust into a foul Stable. So many wealthy Worldlings that tire themselves to get
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and carry Worldly Treasure, when Death cometh it's taken from them, and they for their ill-getting, or ill-using of it, are thrust down to Hell: The rich man died, and in Hell lift up his eyes.

And if you would deaden your hearts to this empty earth, and look after a treasure above, a happiness beyond the Grave, that shall last as long as your Souls shall last, think often of Death, this would divert your worldly cares and projects.

Remember from this day to your last day cannot be long, your Journey or Voyage is short, and a little provision is enough, neither Poverty nor Riches, but food convenient, is the desire and choice of a Citizen of *Sion*. Converse more with death, and be often looking into Eternity, and thou mayest hear (as it were) a Voice speaking to thee as God to *Baruck*, Jer. xlv. 4, 5. *I will break down, and pluck up, and seekest thou great things, seek them not.* Death is the great Leveller that will make all equal, and you that grasp the World most greedily, will find it but vanity; for all is vanity, is the language of experience, *Eccles. i. 2.*
1 John ii. 17.

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When *Samuel* was to anoint *Saul*, he brought or directed him to *Rachel's* Sepulchre, and to this end (as is supposed) namely, to suppress or prevent haughty, proud thoughts, that might arise from that new and great preferment. And if the supposition be true, it is as if he had spoken thus, *Saul*, God hath highly honoured you, and I anoint you King: But remember, here lies the dust of that beautiful *Rachel*; and though you are now King in *Israel*, yet must you be as *Rachel*, viz. laid in a Grave or Sepulchre, the thoughts of which is a very mortifying Meditation. You that have the waters of a full Cup, that wallow in wealth, and swim in worldly glory, to wean you from the World (that your hearts may not be turned into Earth, and buried before you are buried) keep fresh in your thoughts Death and Eternity, *Job* xiv.

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3. Would you be deeply sensible of the sad and doleful condition of unbelievers when they come to die? think seriously of your latter end. What will you do in the hour of distress, when God shall call for your breath, change your countenance, and require your Souls,
if

if you have made no preparation for Death and Judgment?

Poor Souls! I would pity you with my very heart, to think how ignorant you are of your great concernments; you eat, drink, sleep, buy, sell, and get gain, but slight your souls, and do not consider of the evil day.

Woe be unto him that is alone, that is alone in Life, and alone in Death, that hath no Christ to befriend him, or stand by him in that woeful day, that cometh to lie down on his death-bed without peace or pardon, who shall go into a Grave, and stand before the Bar without an Advocate to plead for him.

It is most probable, you may have different apprehensions of yourselves and others in your dying hour, for the nearer the Object, the clearer the sight; O sinners! when the door of Eternity begins to open (as usually it doth to men dying) you will have other thoughts of yourselves and other men. Here you ruffle it out, thinking yourselves above, and better than others; behold great *Babel*, said that proud person in his princely Palace; but when pale death appears, it will pull down those Peacock's Feathers, cause their Crests to fall. Now
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When *Samuel* was to anoint *Saul*, he brought or directed him to *Rachel's* Sepulchre, and to this end (as is supposed) namely, to suppress or prevent haughty, proud thoughts, that might arise from that new and great preferment. And if the supposition be true, it is as if he had spoken thus, *Saul*, God hath highly honoured you, and I anoint you King: But remember, here lies the dust of that beautiful *Rachel*; and though you are now King in *Israel*, yet must you be as *Rachel*, viz. laid in a Grave or Sepulchre, the thoughts of which is a very mortifying Meditation. You that have the waters of a full Cup, that wallow in wealth, and swim in worldly glory, to wean you from the World (that your hearts may not be turned into Earth, and buried before you are buried) keep fresh in your thoughts Death and Eternity, *Job* xiv. 14.

3. Would you be deeply sensible of the sad and doleful condition of unbelievers when they come to die? think seriously of your latter end. What will you do in the hour of distress, when God shall call for your breath, change your countenance, and require your Souls,
if

if you have made no preparation for Death and Judgment?

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the World shines and sparkles in your eyes, which makes you judge and think, that nothing but Riches, Honour, and Greatness, can make you happy; then it will appear (the Paint being off) to be an empty nothing. As for the pure in heart, who mourn for sin, and mind their Souls above the World, are scorned, jeered, hated, being looked upon as a company of poor, pensive, sneaking, besotted fools, will then be adjudged the best, wisest, and happiest men on Earth. Now sin is excused, and called a light and little thing, or trick of youth; but then it will have a black and dreadful face, and feel more heavy than lead, taste more bitter than Death itself.

Now the Damned and Cursed Crew, are your brave boon Companions and bosom friends; but when you are come to your dying groans, and cold sweats, away with them, their sight is terrible. But know that you who have been companions in sin, must be companions in sufferings, and lye down together in everlasting chains and flames; you shall be fettered and bound together, and never part any more for ever.

Now an interest in Christ, and a life of holiness, is little valued, and every
base

base lust and trifle preferred: then a World, a World for Christ. Forty thousand pounds for a good Conscience, cried out a wicked wealthy Worldling, when dying, and passing into eternity.

4. Would you expediate your Repentance? try your state, and make all ready for the other World; think upon this last enemy, the King of Terrors, that will e're long terminate your days, and then all your opportunities will be gone for ever.

If the thoughts of death, especially the second death, did but influence your hearts and penetrate upon your consciences, you would easily be persuaded to cast away your sins; namely, to cut off a right hand, or pluck out a right eye, and to rent your hearts, to sit alone, to mourn in secret, to afflict your souls, and to put your mouths in the dust, if so be there may be hope, *Lam.* iii. 28, 29. We see that men in a journey, if they think they have day enough, they are slack, and slow enough, but if they see but a little time, they will make speed. If a man must do the work of a whole day in half a day, he will make haste: Repentance is not a work for a day, tho' a daily work, our whole

whole life is little enough to compleat and perfect it. As long as we sin, we must mourn; while we provoke the Judge, we must plead guilty, and sue out our Pardon with Ropes about our Necks, and smiting on our breasts (and if it might be) with tears of Blood. And the great things of Death and Judgment will prepare and prompt you to do it suddenly for when the day is gone, the night comes, and the Grave and Hell have shut their mouths upon you, what can be done? *Eccles. ix. 10.*

5. Would you pray more fervently, more frequently than ever you have done? remember you must die.

The Monuments and Statues of the dead (as one notes) are made in a praying posture, *viz.* kneeling, and with hands lifted up to Heaven (as if the remembrance of them, now dead) should teach us our duty, what we must do whilst living. One that was wont to pray often in a day, being asked, why he spent so much time in Prayer? gave no other answer but this, *I must die, I must die.* An awakening apprehension of a man's entrance upon an endless state, and a speedy approach before the
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Holy God, will make him pray, and that importunately. If there be in the Family, a Husband, Wife, or Child, near unto death, almost every one that cometh about the bed will be lifting up hands, and putting up Prayers, and then you cry out, send speedily for some sober serious Minister, or for some solid, savory, praying Christian, to commend his sad case to God. The young Man that lately suffered for Murder, who came into *Newgate* as ignorant of God, as the Horse or the Mule; and senseless of his soul, as a stock or a stone, was, by the access and application of Ministers to him, convinced of his desperate case, and through the Grace and blessing of God upon his appointed means, he seemed so deeply sensible of the dreadful hazard of his precious soul, that he did with so much brokenness of heart confess his sins, pray and plead with God in Christ for pardon, even to the wonder and amazement of those Ministers and Christians who were present.. And being asked how often he prayed, answered, five or six times in a day; and it was with such meltings, and multitude of tears, that did move the very bowels of the Auditors (and as they said) turned

ed them into tears. Thus you see how a powerful conviction of Death and judgment may prevail upon the heart, to make them cry to God, that never prayed before. As for you that can lie down at night, rise up in the morning, and go about the World without secret or Family Prayer: I must tell you that you have but flight, if any thoughts of death and eternity, and no sense of, or regard of your everlasting condition, which is a sad symptom of a Christless state.

6. Would you do good to others, to their bodies and to their souls, consider you must dye, for after death you will be utterly incapacitated of doing any thing. The wise Man speaking of the season of doing, and of the vicissitudes of Man's Life, namely, that there is a time to be born, and a time to die: and he having observed the issues and changes of Providence, that hath made every thing beautiful in its season, concludes, that it is best for a man to do good in his life, *Eccles. iii. 12. As you have therefore opportunity* (saith the Apostle) *let us do good to all men, Gal. vi. 10. When it is in the power of thine hand to do it, Prov. iii. 27.* Sirs, the real thoughts
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of death will prompt you to give a portion to six, and also to seven, and that in season; for when death comes, all is gone, then it's no more in the power of thine hand to do it.

Did you now believe and consider, that you must die, and give an account to God, the great Landlord and Donor of all your good things (great Receipts, having great Accounts) you would not contract your hearts, and shut up your bowels against those many miserable objects who are so often in your view.

Now, that you may be like sheep, and not like swine, be good in your life; and let your acts of mercy be distributed in the morning, the fittest season to sow this seed: therefore speedily draw out thy Soul to the hungry, before death separate thy soul and Body; for with such Sacrifice God is well pleased, *Isa. x. Heb. xiii. 14.*

7. Would you get and keep sincerity, (a precious Pearl indeed) think often of Death and Judgment. Then it will be tried, then it will stand you in stead. Sincerity (the Scripture perfection) is the best of a Christian, the grace of every Grace; for Faith unfeigned, and love in sincerity, are the very Nerves and Sinews of Christianity.

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The next best to the precious blood and righteousness of our glorious Redeemer, (to plead for us at the hour of death, and in the Court of Heaven) is truth in the inward parts, *Isa.* xxxviii. 3. To be a mourner in *Sion* is matter of solace, and real comfort, but to be a sinner in *Sion* is sad, and will be matter of torment. A *Judas* among the Apostles, a Devil in a *Samuel's* Mantle, is a Devil indeed. The sinners in *Sion* are afraid, and cause enough; for to live and die a Hypocrite, is most dreadful, because Hypocrisy will certainly bring you down to Hell, yea, the hottest place of that devouring fire, and everlasting burning, shall be the Hypocrite's portion, *Isa.* xxiii. 14. *Matth.* xxiv. 51.

8. Lastly, would you redeem your time, and be greedy of getting Grace in the day of Grace, for the present, spiritual, and eternal Salvation of Souls; think seriously of your end.

You sleepy secure Souls! Did you consider, that the night of death will come certainly, and may come suddenly, you would work while it is day, and not be so mad as to put off believing, repenting, and Soul-afflicting work, self-trying, and approving work, until the evil day of old age, a sick-bed, or dying

ing pangs feize upon you. Consider, a death-bed repentance is seldom had, and seldom good, or a sick-bed repentance is seldom a sound, but often sick repentance. Now if you would imitate your Lord, to work while it is day, remember you must die, *Job ix. 4.*

Directions and Helps to consider of your latter End.

Direct. 1. *Search diligently to find out what it is that keeps you, and the serious thoughts of death and eternity, at so great a distance, and cry mightily to God, speedily to remove it: If it be either Ignorance, Atheism, Unbelief, Sensuality, Earthly-mindedness, or Security, be deeply sensible of it, and set Prayer to work, pour out thy very Soul to God with the greatest fervor and importunity. Say as Moses, Who knoweth the power of thine Anger? Even according to thy fear, so is thy wrath. So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom, Psal. xc. 11, 12. Sirs, it is spiritual Wisdom will cause you to consider, then cry after knowledge, and lift up thy voice for understanding, Prov. ii. 3, 4. For she is thy life, Prov. iv. 13. It is as much as thy life and soul is worth.*

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Then enter into thy Closet, and fall on thy knees, and pray to God, in the Name of Christ, for spiritual Wisdom; we must seek it, *Ezek. xxxvi. 37.* And God will give it, *Jam. i. 5.* Beg more than for thy life, for a truly wise and awakened heart, without which the great concerns of God, and thine immortal Soul, be for ever neglected.

Direct. 2. Diligently and faithfully use, and improve the most awakening means, which have a tendency hereunto.

1. *Set yourselves under a powerful, faithful, and soul-searching Ministry, who make the conversion of Souls their main business.* A lazy sleepy Minister is not like to awaken a secure sinner, the Conviction and Conversion of Souls is not the mark they shoot at. Resolve to hear, love, countenance and encourage those that grapple most with the Conscience, and earnestly endeavour to drive and draw Souls to Jesus Christ, by setting the blessing and the curse, life and death before them. Conviction leads the way to Conversion, as the needle of the thread: What is a Plaister worth, where there is no wound? It is the broken bones cry
out

out for help, the whole need not the Physician. General, overly Preaching is like the sword in the scabbard, that doth not cut nor wound; or like Physick in the bottle, that doth not penetrate or work; but plain, particular convincing Preaching (such as *Nathan's* to *David*, or *Peter's* to the *Jews*, 2. *Sam.* ii. 7. *Acts* ii. 36.) is like the sword in the Bowels, or Physick in the Body, that will pain to purpose. Those Preachers that have no faculty of reproving and convincing, sleepy, secure sinners, are like a company of Drone Bees, that have lost their sting, being good for nothing. But they that have the charge of so many Golden Fleeces, should sever the Wheat from the Chaff, the Sheep from the Goats, the precious from the vile; and in so doing we shall be as God's Mouth, and free from the Blood of all Men.

O then, let this dreadful and amazing Doctrine of Death and Judgment be more frequently and effectually Preached, that souls in peril near run, may see their sin and danger, and fly to Christ as the only refuge: Knowing the terror of God, we persuade men, 2 *Cor.* v. 11. *Matth.* iii. 7.

2. *Converse with the best Christians*, viz. them that are grave, sober, solid, favoury, and sound in the Faith: Such as make Religion their great business, who love to speak of God, and of the World to come, and by whose Counsel and Example you may be stirred up, and perswaded to repentance and holiness, to consider of Death and Judgment. These were *David's* excellent ones, in whom he did delight, and make his companions, *Psal.* iii. and cxix. 36.

3. *Read the best books*, and those that treat of Death and Judgment, but especially the word of God. There are the pure Crystal Streams and richest Mines; in this field you will find the Pearl. *Let the word of God dwell in you richly*, be not ignorant of any part of it, but be sure to acquaint thyself with those Scriptures that speak of the shortness of Life, the certainty of Death and Judgment, Heaven and Hell: Read the Book of *Job* and the twelfth Chapter of *Ecclesiastes*, *Psal.* xxxix. *Psal.* xc. And let me desire you to be often urging upon your hearts some of those Scriptures that set forth the dreadfulnes of that place of Torment, that will be the portion of all that forget God, and make no provision
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for their precious souls : some few I have here set down, which I desire you would all consider and apply. *Upon the wicked he shall rain fire and brimstone, and a horrible tempest ; this shall be the portion of their Cup,* Psal xi. 6. *Woe be unto the Wicked, it shall go ill with them,* Isa. iii. 10. *He shall cast them into a furnace of fire ; there shall be weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth,* Matth. xiii. 42. Isa. xxxiii. 14, and lxvi. 15. Matth. xxv. 41. Luke xvi. 25, 26. 2 Theff. i. 8, 9. Rev. vi. 8, 14, 16.

Direct. 3. Make Conscience of setting apart a little time every day on purpose to think of your latter end. Do it so frequently, until Death and you become familiar ; ever and anon put thyself into a posture of dying ; converse with thy winding sheet, Coffin, Grave ; let thy great change be so upon thy heart, that thou mayest every morning or evening walk a turn or two with Death : Remember how ever it be with thee now, thou must ere long be gasping and groaning for death upon thy dying bed, and grapple with the King of Terrors, and in a moment go down to the Grave, and shalt come up no more, *Job x. 21.*

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If thou wouldst affect thy heart with thoughts of thy latter end, go down to *Golgotha*, and think upon those dry bones, and putrified bodies, and there revive the memory of your departed Relations, Husbands, Wives, Children, Friends, Neighbours, and look beyond the Chambers of the Grave, converse with those miserable departed souls, give the Prisoners of the pit a visit. Meditate on the raging furious flames, that dismal darkness, smook and stink of the bottomless pit, the shrieking of the damned, and roaring of the Devils, the heart-piercing complaints for water to cool their scorching tongues. And when thou dost think upon those Millions of souls that are hanging up in Hell, reflect upon thyself, and expect thy turn speedily. Suppose every day thy last, every meal thy last, every journey thy last, every duty, Sacrament, Sermon, thy last. And when the Lord's day cometh, think with thyself this will be the last spiritual Market that I shall have to buy the spiritual Oil of Grace, and to provide for the Bridegroom's coming; after this day is ended, I may never more hear the Lord Jesus speak to me by the mouths of his faithful Ministers, never be invited
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to come to Christ, or to believe, repent, part with sin, and accept of a pardon more, and so demean thyself every day, and in every duty, as if thou shouldst be called to God's Bar, and give up thine account at night. In all thy thoughts, words, and actions, say to thy self, would I do thus and thus, *viz.* would I eat, drink, sleep, converse, buy, sell, preach, hear, pray, or worse, if I certainly knew this day would be my last. O let that Motto, *Memento Mori*, which some carry in their Rings, be engraven on your hearts, it being the great concernment of our lives. This is that which God's People, and some of the Heathen too, have been careful to remember. King *Asa* made his Sepulchre in his lifetime, *2 Chron.* xvi. 14. and some in their Gardens, and places of solace and delight, as *Joseph* of *Arimathea*, *John* xix. 41. And some of the heathen were wont to walk among the Graves, to put them in mind of Death; some have had their Graves always before their Gates, others dead mens skulls presented every day at their Tables; and shall we that believe the Doctrine of the other World, put off the serious thoughts of death? *Solomon* adviseth us, to go to the house of mourning,

ing, telling us it is better, because the living will lay it to heart. When you hear the tidings of the death of your Friends, Relations, or Neighbours, go thither, though not personally, yet contemplatively, in your minds and thoughts, go, and put yourselves in their stead. And think thus, a living Man or Woman is become a dead Corps, or cold clay, the soul is gone to its everlasting habitation; but to what place, whether to be comforted or tormented, who can tell? If he were a godly man, he is certainly gone to heaven; if thou art such a one, thy soul will shortly be with him; but if an ungodly man, he is certainly gone to Hell, and now among Devils: And if thou art such a one, thou shalt ere long be there too. 'Tis true, the dead can have no thoughts of the living, but the living (saith *Solomon*) know that they must die. And you that are young, when you hear of the death of a lively lusty young man, or lovely beautiful young woman, stop, reflect, and consider, may not this be thy case, O man, woman, or child, in a very little space? I shall say no more by way of direction, only desire you to review the particulars before mentioned, and you that are Parents

rents and Masters of Families, who make conscience of looking to the souls of those committed to your charge, may cause your children and servants to learn by heart the particulars I here set down.

1. *That it is most certain an end will be.*

2. *At our latter end all things in this World will be gone for ever.*

3. *All the pleasures of sin will be gone, and leave nothing but a sting.*

4. *That only which is eternal, will stand us in stead.*

5. *Consider which of the two eternities are you going towards.*

6. *We are all near our everlasting habitation.*

7. *You know not how suddenly, or unexpected your end be.*

8. *When death comes, your souls are stated, your eternity is cast.*

9. *'Tis a dreadful and amazing sight, to see a Christless soul breathing out his last.*

4. *Use.* May be of comfort to the poor people of God, who, through fear of Death, are all their lifetime subject to bondage. Let not your hearts be troubled, fear not, neither be terrified, because of this King of fears : But cheer up your spirits, and comfort up your hearts

with this, that death, as terrible as it is to the wicked, cannot hurt you. The day of your death will be better than the day of your birth, and therefore death is put into the Believer's Inventory, and reckoned amongst his privileges, 1 Cor. iii. 22. Death will be gain to the godly man, *viz.* an outlet to all his present misery, and an inlet to endless glory. Then the truly penitent, perplexed, wearied soul, shall be perfectly free from the power of Satan, the fiery darts, and dreadful Temptations of that unclean spirit. Then the old Serpent for ever will be under their feet. Then the body of death shall be put off, and the indwelling of sin, that natural fountain of Corruption, will be perfectly dried up. You shall never complain of vain thoughts, or hard hearts any more: Never doubt of the truth of Grace, or favour of God more: The Believer shall then be with Jesus Christ, the day of his Dissolution will be the Day of his Coronation, he shall then receive the Crown, sit down on the Throne, and enter into his Master's joy, which is fullness of joy and pleasures for evermore.

Object. *I sometimes think of Death, but the thoughts of death and judgment are*

are very terrible, I fear I am not fit to die. How shall it be known?

Ans. There is an habitual fitness for death, an actual fitness for death. Every graciously upright Man or Woman in the World, that fears God in Truth, is habitually fit to die, so prepared for his great change, that the sting of death, or second death shall not hurt him, having past the strait gate, shot the gulf, he is out of danger. As soon as a man is in a state of Grace, born again, made a new creature, and by Faith united unto the Lord Jesus Christ; God is reconciled, his person justified, his sins pardoned, and recorded in the Court of Heaven, though his pardon is not brought down, transcribed and sealed in the Court of his own Conscience. The truly converted soul is God's special Favourite, and shall lodge in his bosom, and never be more out of his favour: 'Tis true, Heaven may be out of sight, God may frown, but will never condemn. *There is now no condemnation to them that are in Christ, Rom. viii. 1. If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous, 1 John ii. 1. Who shall lay any claim to the charge of God's Elect?*

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it is God that justifieth, it is Christ that died, Rom. viii. 33, 34.

Quest. When is the Godly Man actually prepared for Death?

Answ. When his spiritual estate is well settled, *viz.* all made sure between God and his soul particularly.

1. When a man is truly conscious to himself that he hath sincerely, and with much brokenness of heart repented of all his known sins committed before, or after conversion so that there is no fresh or former guilt remaining on him. This Godly sorrow, is the Godly man's pleasure; he delights to be sowing in tears, loves with his soul a wet seed-time; for they that sow in tears shall reap a harvest of Joy, which is a time of refreshing from the presence of God; compare *Psal.* cxxvi. 5, 6, and *Acts* iii. 19.

2. When sin is not so great a burden, that he is weary of this body of death, and willing the infected house should be pulled down, that the Leprosy might be cured, that so he might never sin or offend his Father more. The serious thoughts

thoughts and sense of which is a heavy burden, and matter of grief that makes him groan and complain. We in this Tabernacle groan, being burdened: and O how bitterly did *St. Paul* complain, *Rom. vii. 24. O wretched man that I am who shall deliver me from the body of this death!* He had been in deaths often for the sake of his dear Lord, but this death, his body of sin, troubled him more than any: It was so great a burden to holy *David*, that he felt it in his very bones, *Psal. xxxviii. 3.*

3. The Godly man is fit to die, when the work of Grace is perfected, and his Generation-work ended. When the believing soul hath his Vessel full of Oil, and the Wedding Garment of the Glorious Righteousness of Christ above him, then he is a Vessel of Honour prepared unto Glory, *Rom. ix. 23*, wrought for the self-same thing, *2 Cor. iv. 5*, and made meet, or fit for the inheritance of the Saints in light, *Col. i. 12*. The ship that is laden or freighted, is fit to put to Sea, and to sail from hence, or for its appointed Port. The Labourer is fit to receive his Wages when he hath done his work; so when the Heaven-born soul

soul hath faithfully served his Generation, and done the work in his place, Calling, and Relations, for which God sent him, and intrusted him (though the best fall short, being in some degrees unprofitable servants) then is he fit to welcome death, though to the flesh its the King of Terrors. When the Godly man, living or dying, can appeal to the heart-searching God, as *Hezekiah* did, *Isa.* xxxviii. and say, *I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do*, *Job.* xvii. I have finished my course, and there is laid up for me a Crown of Righteousness, 2. *Tim.* iv. 8. This makes me fit and willing to depart to be with Christ.

4. When sin is pardoned and the pardon sealed, *i. e.* when the clamorous noise of the guilt of sin in the Conscience, is calmed and silenced, by the blood of sprinkling, and his evidences for Heaven bright and clear, so that his better Country is within view, and the gate of Glory wide open, namely, abundant entrance into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Christ, 2 *Pet.* i. 11. *Lot* had a mind to prolong his time in *Sodom*, it was a goodly City, and he was not well assured whither to go, when he had

had left it. But when the Gracious soul is assured of a better state, a better life, that's hid with Christ in God, so that he can say, as once an eminent man did dying: *I shall but change my place, I shall not change my company.* He may then (being sealed to the day of Redemption) long for his dissolution.

5. When the heart is weaned from, and weary of this evil world, and so inflamed with love to Christ, that it cannot live without him, or be absent from him: Having tasted of the Grapes of *Eshcol*, he must to *Canaan* to see the good Land, that goodly Mountain. A fore-sight or glimpse of the sweetness, beauty, and glory of the Lord Jesus, will cause most vehement longing to be with him. *Now let thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation:* For this we groan earnestly. And O how confidently, quietly, and comfortably may such a soul entertain the thoughts of death, that hath sincerely repented of all sin, and to whom sin is so grievous a burthen, that he would die to be rid of it; and whose soul is filled and fraughted with Grace, and assured of Glory, and his heart sent as a
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Harbinger to Heaven before him. And indeed a serious and hearty consideration of our eternal state would provoke us to press earnestly after this.

To close up all, let me ask you, in the presence of the great Judge of quick and dead, (at whose dreadful Tribunal you must shortly stand) these following Queries.

Query 1. First, Whether a seasonable preparation for death and judgment, *viz.* how you may escape Hell, and come safe to Heaven, be not the most urgent and important business you have in all the World? Let your consciences judge and determine.

Query 2. Are they not in a very happy condition, that do believe, repent, and turn to God with their whole heart? Who by living a life of Grace, are truly prepared for death, out of that dreadful hazard of losing Heaven, *Rom. viii. 1. Psal. xxxvii. 37.*

Query 3. Is it not possible that you being on this side the Grave and Hell, may prepare for this evil day? were you resolved upon it, it would be done:
you

you have often intended it, promised it, when shall it be? none but the Devil, and your Flesh, will stop and hinder you.

Query 4. Do you firmly believe the things here will fail, that death will come, that sin, that accursed thing, will sting, and that the impenitent sinner's case at the hour of death will be sad, and very desperate? Let me say to all such, there is not a night you lie down upon your beds, but you run a very great hazard; if death should call, and you not ready, you must go, tho' you be ruined to eternity, - *Matth.* xxv. 10, 11, 12, 19, 22, 23.

Query 5. Have you so lived, as to be fit to lie down in a Grave, to rise, stand again, and before God, who is a consuming fire? Do you know yourselves in a state of Grace, that you are new born, that your evidences for heaven are clear and certain? Is your work done? Do your Lamps burn? and have you a well grounded assurance, that you are in the number of those to whom death will be a privilege? *Phil.* i. 21.

Query 6. Can you chearfully, and without dread, entertain the thoughts of
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a dissolution, and of leaving all your earthly and sensual delights? Suppose the dreadful Judge should at this instant send death into this place, with the names of five or six of you in his writ or forehead, and Death should say, You, and you, this man and that woman, must go along with me.

I have received a command from the great and terrible God, (who hath the power of Death and of Hell) to bring you young man, young woman, this day or night before the Judgment-seat. I have often warned you by sending my Deputies, and that this ten, twenty, or forty years; every Coffin, every dead Corps, or Grave you have seen, was so many intimations of my coming. Now (saith death) I am come, look here upon my commission, see my dart and my sting. This dart must kill thy body, and send thy soul into eternity. I command thee this moment, to bid adieu, to take thy leave of Friends, Relations, Houses, Lands, Pleasures of sin, once for all. Thou shalt never see or enjoy them more, *Luke* xii. 19, 20. O how can you think of your dying, the world's burning, the Trumpets sounding, the dead's rising, and standing at the Bar,
and

and not fear and tremble? You Sons and Daughters of Pleasure! Did you consider what horror and astonishment doggs you at the heels, which will inevitably come upon you as travail on a woman with Child, you would not say unto God, depart, and treasure up wrath, lay up scourges and scorpions for your distressed souls against the last day.

Query 7. Let us ask you that pass for Saints, and hope for Heaven, whether your consciences, in secret do not tell you, that you made but poor preparations for it; yea, it may be you have done less for heaven than many that are now in hell?

You say you must die, and come to judgment: but how stands the case as to the other World? If you look downward to this world, its well, but how is it within your precious souls? Do you believe that Atheists, Unbelievers, Drunkards, Swearers, Murderers, Thieves, Persecutors, Liars, Sabbath-breakers, Adulterers, Worldlings, are going swiftly to Hell? Do you believe that Christ's flock is little, and not fear yourselves? Do you think that *Esau, Judas, Abab, Agrippa,*

Agrippa, Herod, Simon Magus, the foolish Virgins are in hell, and yet confident of your going to heaven? These have out-done many of you. *Esau wept and cried for the blessing*, Heb. xii. 17. *Ahab bumbled himself*, 1 Kings xxi. 29. *Herod did many things, and heard John joyfully*, Mark vi. 20. *Agrippa was almost a Christian*, Acts xxvi. 28. *The Scribe was not far from the kingdom of God*, Mark xii. 34. The foolish Virgins were not prophane, they took care to trim their lamps, and knock'd at the door. Now what sins have you left? what grace have you exercised? what duties have you performed? and how? Take heed you be not deceived; *Strive to enter in at the strait gate, for many will seek to enter in, and shall not be able*, Luke xiii. 14.

Query 8. You having so many warnings, time and means to prepare for death and judgment, and will not, who will pity you when you perish? God will not, *Prov. i. 26, 27.* Christ will not, *Luke xix. 27.* Angels, Saints, Ministers will not, all will say, *away with them*, let them be damned.

And O what a killing and amazing fight will Christ's coming in the Clouds
be

be to all that either denied his coming, or who would not prepare for it. His incarnation was terrible, *Mat.* ii. 3. His crucifixion was more terrible, *Luke* xxiii. 44, 45, 47, 48. But his being on the Tribunal will be 'most terrible. Then shall the Tribes of the Earth mourn, *Mat.* xxiv. 30. and men cry to the rocks and mountains to fall on them, *Rev.* vi. 15, 16. When they shall see so many thousands and Millions of Men and Women dragged down with all the Devils of Hell, to that burning Lake of fire and brimstone. How will they then mourn for sorrow of heart, and howl for vexation of spirit, and with bitterness of soul wish they had never heard of Christ, that they had been born among the Heathen, or never had a being, or enjoyed a life of pleasure upon the earth! How will the wretched sinner beat his breast, pluck off his hair, tear his bowels, crying out (when he sees all hope is gone) O that I had now no soul! or that this immortal soul were mortal! that I might now die, and breathe no more! or that my sentence might be but to lodge with devils in this burning lake for ten thousand years, that so I might not remain in a state of banishment from the face and presence of God to all eternity.

O then

O then pray ! that serious thoughts of death may be always upon thine heart ; and whither thou goest, let them go ; and where thou lodgest, let them lodge ; that thou mayest speak of it to thy Children and Family ; when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. Oh let these great things of death and Judgment, be bound as a sign upon thine hand, and write them upon the posts of thine house, and on the gates, that they may be always before thine eyes, for thy good always, that thou mayest beware, lest thou forget the Lord thy God, and the everlasting concernments of thy immortal Soul, and God's anger be kindled against thee, and destroy thee suddenly, with a mighty destruction.

Consider now what I have spoken, and the Lord give thee understanding in all things, 2 *Tim.* 7. Which is that God wisheth in the Text, *O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end.*

28. SE60

F I N I S.

